

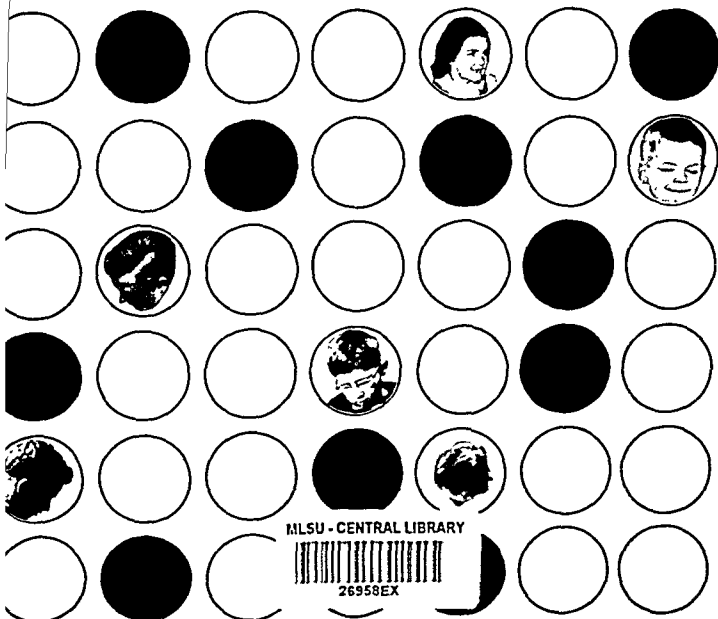
SCOTT, FORESMAN AND COMPANY | CHICAGO ATLANTA DALLAS PALO ALTO FAIR LAWN, N.J.



# Children and books

REVISED EDITION

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT



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THE SCOTT-FORESMAN PROFESSIONAL SERIES

EDUCATING AMERICA'S CHILDREN

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# Preface

To my collaborators, the teachers, children, librarians, parents, and students who have helped make this book . . .

CHILDREN AND BOOKS grew in the first place out of the tantalizing questions adults are always asking: "What kind of books do children like?" "How can we get our children to read more and better books?" It grew also out of many observations of children choosing or rejecting books in their homes, nursery schools, libraries, and classrooms. It grew from watching artist-teachers using books in such happy and meaningful ways that the children reached new heights of appreciation and taste. It grew from the eager response of college students to the beauty and fun of children's books. It grew from watching parents share their joy in books with their children, making book lovers of them by sheer contagion. And it grew primarily from liking children and books.

*Children and Books* was planned as a text for children's literature courses in the education departments and library training schools of colleges and universities. And it has been a special source of satisfaction to receive letters from students saying that they have kept their copies and used them constantly for reference in their work. Parents, camp directors, and Sunday-school teachers also write that *Children and Books* has been helpful, since it covers the reading interests—imaginative and factual—of children from two to fifteen or sixteen. Indeed, the heartwarming letters of appreciation that have continued to pour in over the years have led to the preparation of this new edition.

Anyone who has used *Children and Books* will be curious to know how it has been changed. The original organization has been retained because there have been so many favorable comments on its convenience. Since a new chapter has been added, however, the chapters have been renumbered.

Chapter 1, "The Child and His Books," and new Chapter 2, "The Adult and the Child's Books," constitute a frame of reference for all the discussions to follow. "The Child and His Books" develops the philosophy that is basic to the consideration of every book for children: what are the child's needs at this particular time, and how may books best serve him? "The Adult and the Child's Books" is devoted to showing grown-ups how to bring children and good books happily together, with special attention to illustrations and illustrators. This chapter also has general criteria for evaluating children's books and discusses reference books that have proved particularly helpful to teachers and librarians.

Every chapter has new authors, new books, and new illustrations not found in the earlier edition. Bibliographies have been greatly expanded, and a glance at them will show new trends which have developed since *Children and Books* first was published. It was, for example, a pleasant surprise to discover an astonishing growth of interest in poetry for children. Perhaps the seven chapters on poetry in the first edition of this book have helped promote this interest. We hope so. Certainly, poetry and verse choirs are flourishing in the United States and Canada as never before.

There are many new authors and titles for the chapter on realistic modern fiction, but the areas with the most overwhelming number of new and worth-while books are fairy tales, historical fiction, biography, and science.

In historical fiction or fictionalized biography, there is a brand new phenomenon—the rise of the series, especially those connected with American history. There have been series of books before, but when a child wants every book in a series that already runs to fifty or a hundred volumes, grown-ups begin to ask

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desperately, "What about these books? How good are they? How reliable are they?" To help answer these questions *Children and Books* now examines and evaluates the series.

"Reading Plus," Chapter 20, has been revised to include a discussion of the relationship of television to children's reading, re-evaluations of radio and movies, and a summary of the hotly argued problems of the comics. Many suggestions are made for using television, radio, and movies to supplement and arouse interest in books.

#### **To the college instructor who may use this textbook**

*Children and Books* provides a full year's course in children's reading, which means that for courses of only one semester, teachers must choose some chapters for detailed study and others for rapid reading or omission. For example, the first three and the last two chapters in the book may be read rapidly for their general philosophy, but the more thorough consideration indicated in the guides to study may be omitted. The seven chapters on poetry may be divided—teachers of young children taking the chapter on *Mother Goose* in detail and teachers of older children studying the ballads. Each group will profit from the class discussions. Similar divisions in assigned readings are possible in other chapters. Instructors of both two-semester and one-semester courses may also wish to vary the order of presenta-

tion. For instance, if the instructor prefers to take poetry last, it is entirely possible to begin with folk tales—"Old Magic"—and continue through, or to, biography. There are, however, several advantages in beginning with poetry, as the guides to study suggest.

#### **To all grown-ups who may read this book**

Parents or uncles and aunts wishing to buy books for children or to find out something about their reading interests may skip through these pages unhampered by study guides and impending examinations. For you, the books reviewed and the criteria in each chapter should be of special value. Learning of the delightful uses to which children have put their reading ought to be refreshing and helpful for all adults. What a pity that we grown-ups are no longer so moved by our reading that we must rush to our easels, seize brushes and paint pots, and record our enchantment in gay colors and uninhibited lines! Perhaps in these pages you will catch some hint of the first fine raptures a child feels when he encounters a book he loves. And perhaps from these pages there will emerge some clues to finding more of these treasures for each child—books he takes to bed with him, books he carries along on his summer vacations, books which tickle his risibilities or warm his heart, books to grow on. So, in conclusion, we wish you and your children "Happy reading!"

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To my mother, Mary Elizabeth Hill, whose faith in her children and joy in books and people never failed, and

To my husband, Charles Criswell Arbuthnot, whose wise counsel and gay companionship have made this long task possible and worth while,

CHILDREN AND BOOKS is dedicated with gratitude and love.

*May Hill Arbuthnot*

*Cleveland, 1957*

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## *It could have happened*



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## part six

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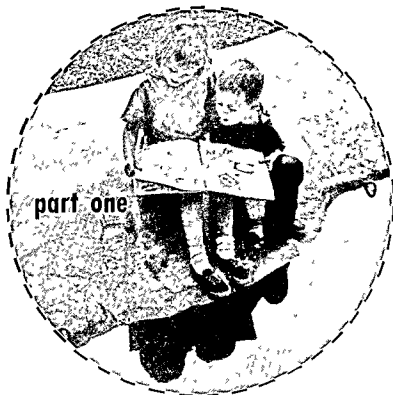
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# Children discover books



## part one

*The child and his books*

*The adult and the child's books*

*Children's books: history and trends*



Illustration by Leonard Weisgard for  
Children's Book Week, 1956 (original in color)

*"It's Always Book Time" is the title  
for this Book Week poster by Weisgard.  
Stylized and simple, this picture has  
the timeless quality of a dream.*

Books are no substitute for living, but they can add immeasurably to its richness. When life is absorbing, books can enhance our sense of its significance. When life is difficult, they can give us momentary release from trouble or a new insight into our problems, or provide the rest and refreshment we need. Books have always been a source of information, comfort, and pleasure for people who know how to use them. This is as true for children as for adults. Indeed, it is particularly true for children.

In the last few years, writers, artists, and editors have joined forces to make juvenile books so varied in content and so beautiful to look at that adults as well as children enjoy them. The annual output is tremendous, reaching in some years more than twelve hundred titles. These books, like those for adults, range from the unreliable and trashy to the scrupulously accurate and permanently significant. The treasures must be sought for, but they are there, a wealth of fine books old and new.

If we are to find these treasures, the best books for children, we need standards for judging them. But two facts we need to keep constantly before us: a book is a good book for children only when they enjoy it; a book is a poor book for children, even when adults rate it a classic, if children are unable to read it or are bored by its content. In short, we must know hundreds of books in many fields and their virtues and limitations, but we must also know the children for whom they are intended—their interests and needs.

Certain basic needs are common to most peoples and most times. A child's needs are at first intensely and narrowly personal, but, as he matures, they broaden and become more



generally socialized. Struggling to satisfy his needs, the child is forever seeking to maintain the precarious balance between personal

happiness and social approval, and that is no easy task. Books can help him, directly or indirectly.

## The need for security: material, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual

One of man's basic drives is to make himself safe, to hang on and endure, to be as snug and comfortable, as beloved and happy as life permits. The child's sense of *material security* comes first and begins in his mother's or father's arms. It extends gradually to include his regular routines of eating and sleeping and embraces everything that gives him a sense of comfort and well-being. For both children and adults, material satisfactions may become the chief symbols of security. The old fairy tales were told by peoples who seldom had enough to eat or to keep them warm. So their tales are full of brightly burning fires, sumptuous feasts, rich clothes, glittering jewels, and splendid palaces. These are man's age-old symbols of security. Undoubtedly some of the appeal of the old *Elsie Dinsmore* stories (p. 49)<sup>1</sup> and of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Sara Crewe* and *The Secret Garden* (p. 403) lies in this same incredible affluence which the characters enjoy or achieve. The desire for *material* and *economic security*, then, is always a powerful drive in human behavior and of unfailing interest as a motif or leading idea in stories.

Beyond this level of creature comfort and safety, a deeper satisfaction comes from *emotional security*, the rightness and stability of the affections. Stories of home life are popular with children of all ages. However poor and struggling the book family may be, such stories give young readers a sense of emotional security if the members of the family are bound together in love and loyalty. From the famous cycle of stories about the often-endangered Ingalls family (p. 441), by Laura

Ingalls Wilder, children draw a continual sense of warmth and well-being. When, with a blizzard raging outside, the Ingalls children smell the fragrance of Ma's good bread baking, and when Pa manages to keep the little cabin warm and takes down his fiddle to play and sing his gay ballads, then comes the deep, reassuring sense of security. Blizzards may howl, crops may fail, and wolves may keep their vigil close to the cabin door, but within, all is snug, safe, and happy. Love and hard work have erected a barricade against poverty and danger. Emotional security is a higher kind of security than material or economic—mere creature comfort. It has an inner and spiritual quality made up of love, fortitude, and gaiety—the elements of security which every child should have and build into his ideals of family life.

*Intellectual security*, the need to know accurately and surely, is another basic hunger which books can satisfy. It is one urge which adults have almost always recognized and it has frequently been the only justification people felt for buying children books. In one generation, adults sought books which taught children the religious tenets of their group; in another age, books on correct social behavior or ethical standards. Today teachers and parents realize that the keener a child's intelligence the wider his intellectual curiosities will be, and they are surprised and delighted at the range of books which satisfy these interests. Readable, accurate, graphically illustrated books are now available about birds, plants, domestic and wild animals, stars, other times and other peoples, and all the applied sciences from household gadgets to television, radar, jets, and rockets. Adults may find themselves reading factual books

<sup>1</sup>Page numbers in parentheses following a book title or author's or illustrator's name refer to the section in this text where the book, author, or illustrator is discussed.



(Illustration from Leo Politi's *Juanita*, Scribner, 1948 (original in color, book 7¼ x 9½))

Notice how Leo Politi suggests the grave gentleness of these people—little heart-shaped faces, downcast eyes, tender concern for the pets in the orderly procession. A sloping tree carries our attention immediately to the heart of the picture. Soft, clear colors add warmth.

like Herbert Zim's *The Sun* (p. 551) or *What's Inside of Engines?* (p. 551) with respectful interest. Children's encyclopedias have improved greatly in the last ten years and should be given serious consideration by any book-buying family with intellectually alert children. Grown-ups need only know a child's particular interest to find books that will answer his questions reliably and stimulate new curiosities to set him exploring and reading further.

Finally, there is a need for another kind of security less easily defined than the first three. It grows out of family affection and trust, and it comes strongly to the fore in times of stress. It is the need for the kind of *spiritual security* that enables human beings to surmount dangers, failures, and even stark tragedies. Spiritual security is often the result of a strong religious faith. However, such books as *Little Women* and the Wilder stories, without referring to specific religious practices or creeds, leave children with the conviction that decent, kindly people will eventually master hardships and evils if they attack them with courage and perseverance. The old fairy

tales carried this same message and preached it over and over in one tale after another.

More often, in books as in life, spiritual security grows out of a belief in God and a universe in which moral law ultimately prevails. Particular religious groups and practices appear in children's books and reflect something of the diversities of belief in our modern world. *Thee, Hannah!* (p. 419) gives a charming picture of Quaker customs. *Daughter of the Mountains* by Louise Rankin is a story about a little Moslem girl's faith that she can accomplish her impossible mission because she is guided and cared for by God. A camp meeting reforms Pa Slater in Lois Lenski's *Strawberry Girl* (p. 422). *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* by Elizabeth Lewis (p. 455) gives a rich cross section of Confucian guides to conduct. Leo Politi's *Juanita* (p. 32) describes and illustrates the charming Blessing of the Animals which is one of the yearly church festivals on Olvera Street, Los Angeles. *All-of-a-Kind Family* (p. 420) by Sydney Taylor is a captivating picture of Jewish family life and religious observances. *Waterless Mountain* by Laura Armer (p. 417) and *Summer at Yellow Singer's* written by Flora Bailey present the religion of the Navaho Indians with fidelity and beauty. Joseph Krungold's *...and now Miguel* (p. 423) has a discussion of prayer between two teen-age boys that is unique in children's literature.

These representative examples show that through their reading children can get an honest picture of religious diversity which

will develop respect for different groups. However firm a family may be in its adherence to a religious sect or in its objections to all organized religion, it will find in these books a fair picture of the world as it is today. And when children read the biographies of heroes of such divergent religious beliefs as St. Francis of Assisi, John Wesley, Father Damien, Florence Nightingale, and George Washington Carver, they will understand that spiritual security is an impelling and creative force in the lives of men and women.

The need for security of all kinds begins

### The need to belong—to be a part of a group

Growing out of the need for security is the need of every human being to belong, to be an accepted member of a group. "My daddy," or "My big brother," the young child says with pride. At first these experiences are merely egocentric extensions of the child's self-love, but at least he is beginning to line himself up with his family, and this acknowledgment of others marks his growing sense of belonging to a group. Presently this same child will identify himself with his gang, his school, and later with his city and country, and perhaps with a world group.

So the child's literature should reflect this expanding sense of the group. It should begin with stories about the family, the school, and the neighborhood in warm little books such as Carolyn Haywood (p. 400) writes for the primer age and Beverly Cleary (p. 411) carries on for the middle grades in her amusing *Henry Huggins* books. These represent happy, normal group experiences. But there are also stories about children who must struggle anxiously to be liked by the people whose acceptance they long for. The orphaned Heidi (p. 452), Mary in *The Secret Garden*, Cissie in *Peachtree Island*, and Santiago, the Guatemalan Indian boy (p. 418), are good examples. In *Ready-Made Family* we find that the struggle is intensified because the brother and sisters are trying to stay together

with the child himself and is centered in his wants. But books can help him to grow out of his egocentricity to the point where he wants security for other people too. He is moved by stories of parents' self-sacrifice for their children, a boy's struggle for an education, or a nation's desire for independence. Through his own experience and through his reading of good books covering experiences broader than his own can possibly be, a child—and adults too—will finally realize that there can be no security for anyone unless there is security for all.

as a family and also to be accepted by their foster parents and the community. The story of the child who wins a respected place in groups that once rejected him is a satisfying theme from "Cinderella" to *Huckleberry Finn*.

With our growing consciousness of the true functioning of a democracy, stories about minority groups or individual members of such groups gaining respect, not just toleration, are constantly increasing. John Tunis (p. 415) in his popular sports stories for the pre-adolescent and teen-ager, makes his young readers face fully the extra difficulties that beset youngsters of minority groups in winning a place on the team or in the community. Jesse Jackson's autobiographical book, *Call Me Charley* (p. 415), is the poignant story of a lone Negro boy in a white community, and Mabel Leigh Hunt's tender tale of a single Negro family in a white farming community, *Ladycake Farm* (p. 415), carries this difficult problem of acceptance to a heart-warming conclusion. The problem appears in reverse in Ann Nolan Clark's *Little Navajo Bluebird* (p. 418), in which an Indian child passionately rejects the white man and all his ways and wants to belong only to her own tribal group. This unwillingness to go even halfway with a strange people is also happily resolved. Books like these parallel the need

of each individual not only to belong to his own group, but to identify himself warmly and sympathetically with ever widening circles of people.

To this end, it is important that when we give children books about peoples of other races, creeds, or nations, they should be honestly and appealingly represented. Such books should not be little fictionalized tracts on intercultural or international relationships but good stories, so absorbing and so winning

that the reader thinks of himself in terms of the hero or heroine. When a little girl weeps over some of Joanda's difficulties in *Cotton in My Sack* (p. 392), or wishes she could know Hungarian Kate in *The Good Master*, or when a boy identifies himself with the adventurous Chinese boy, Young Fu, then their sense of belonging is widening. They are no longer narrowly provincial; they are becoming the friendly neighbors and well-wishers of many different peoples.

## The need to love and to be loved

Every human being wants to love and to be loved. This need is so pressing that when it is frustrated in one direction it will provide its own substitutes, centering upon almost anything from canaries to antiques. Children, too, set up their own substitutes. A child who feels out of favor or rejected may lavish an abnormal amount of affection upon a stray dog, perhaps identifying himself with the unwanted animal.

It is in his family that the child learns his first lessons in the laws of affectionate relationships. Not only does his sense of security develop from these family patterns, but also his whole approach to other people, and later his search for and treatment of a mate. The status of the mother and the father in the family circle provides a child with his first concepts of the woman's rôle and the man's rôle in life and often determines his consequent willingness or unwillingness to accept his own sex. Books such as *Caddie Woodlawn* (p. 441) can help in this necessary process of growing up, for Caddie, despite her love of boys' games and adventures, gradually learns to appreciate her woman's rôle. Family loyalties provide a basis for loyal friendships as the child's social life widens. When family relationships are normal and happy, a child starts life with healthy attitudes. If he feels loved and knows his love is accepted, he in turn is predisposed toward friendly relationships with people outside the family. When

the reverse is true, his approach to other people is often suspicious or belligerent.

In either case—happy or unhappy home background—books can help. Stories about family life may interpret to the fortunate child the significance of his own experiences which he might otherwise take for granted. When a child finds traces of his father in Pa of the Wilder books, or recognizes his mother in the beloved Mrs. March of *Little Women*, or shares the brother and sister fun of *The Saturdays* (p. 409), his own family will mean more to him. On the other hand, children who have missed these happy experiences may find in family stories vicarious substitutes which give them some satisfaction and supply them with new insight into what families might be.

Another aspect of this need to love and to serve the beloved is the recognition of this same need in other creatures. Stories about wild animals defending their mates or their young or the herd are tremendously appealing. So, too, are stories of pets, steadfast not only in their affection for their own kind but for their human masters as well. Such stories as *Lassie Come Home* have played upon this appeal. The tragedy of most animal tales is always heightened by the inarticulateness of the creatures, which calls forth in children a tenderly protective response. Fine animal stories of all kinds will undoubtedly contribute to breaking down the young child's

unwitting cruelties toward animals and to building up his sensitivity to their needs.

Finally, the need to love and to be loved, which includes family affection, warm friendships, and devotion to pets, leads the child to look toward romance. In children's literature, romance begins early but remains extremely impersonal. The fairy tales, with their long-delayed prince or their princess on a glass hill, are little more than abstract symbols of better things to come. They do, however, help little girls to think of themselves in the girl's rôle and boys to identify themselves with the masculine rôle—an important task of later childhood. In the old ballads, with battle, murder, and sudden death, all for love's sake, the man and the maid are still as nebulous as a dream, but a dream of bright promise.

By the time children are twelve years old the girls are biologically around two years older than the boys of the same chronological age. This means that when boys are absorbed in stories of adventure or sports, girls are looking for stories of romance. A few years ago the milder of the adult novels served for the good readers, but poor readers had to fall back on comic books, soap operas, or the lush lovmaking of moving pictures for information about this new and mysterious world of romance. It is true that *Little Women* carried the girls through their budding love affairs into matrimony and babies, but for the most part books for juvenile readers gave only the faintest hints of a possible love interest in the far, far distant future.

Now the picture has changed. There is an enormous output of "teen-age" novels. While many of them are incredibly stereotyped and predictable, there is a growing number of competent and even distinguished authors who write well and respect their young readers. Although libraries catalog these books in their youth collections, librarians say that a teen-age girl rarely comes in who has not already devoured Maureen Daly's *Seventeenth Summer*. That book made history and is approved equally by youngsters and the

experts, one of whom has said that it "perhaps captures better than any other novel the spirit of adolescence."<sup>1</sup> It shows a delightful small town family, especially seventeen-year-old Angie, who, in the course of picnics and the usual summer fun, encounters the complications and bursting happiness of a first romance. She weathers some hazardous ups and downs and comes to the end of the summer, still happy, but a more responsible and mature human being. This is a thoroughly wholesome introduction to vital problems of adolescence.

Betty Cavanna (Headley) is a competent writer in this field and also is popular with pre-adolescent girls. In her *Going on Sixteen* she shows the misery of the shy wallflower Julie, who finds herself and happiness through her drawing, dog training, and home decorating. Through these activities and some stern self-discipline she gains much-needed confidence with people. Mary Stolz is perhaps the most distinguished writer of teen-age novels, but only the pre-adolescent who is mature and a superior reader can enjoy her books. In her *To Tell Your Love* and Miss Cavanna's *Paintbox Summer* both authors have had the courage to show their heroines weathering stormy and unhappy failures in their first brush with love. This is so common an experience that girls should meet it in fiction healthily resolved. Too many girls feel that all problems end with marriage, so it is salutary to find the heroine of Margaret Bell's Alaska novels, *The Totem Casts a Shadow* and *Watch for a Tall White Sail*, nearly making a tragic failure of her marriage in *Love Is Forever*. Maud Lovelace, whose Betsy, Tacy, and Tib stories have so delighted little girls, has also carried her heroine and her friends into matrimony in *Betsy's Wedding*. These books are good examples of a fresh approach to romance in stories for teen-age and pre-adolescent girls. They supply wholesome pictures of family life, with boys and girls looking away from their families to a serious

<sup>1</sup>Dwight L. Burton, "The Novel for the Adolescent," *English Journal*, September 1951, p. 363.

interest in someone of the opposite sex. The establishment of a desirable romantic attachment is one of the most important tasks of growing up. A well-written story that shows

all the complications of romance, its pitfalls as well as its happiness, can provide young people with needed guidance in an approach to one of life's most vital problems.

## The need to achieve—to do or be something worthy of respect

Both grown-ups and children have strong drives to achieve, to do something for which they are respected and loved. The young child's first heroes are doers, beginning with his own mother and father whom he admires partly because they can make the family car go, bake cookies, make dresses, and perform other pleasant and surprising domestic miracles. His first book heroes are likewise creatures of action, from Angus, who first chases and then is chased by the ducks (*Angus and the Ducks*, p. 470), to David, who slays the giant Goliath. Through action, Tom Sawyer and other lusty heroes achieve a place in the world—"status," as the sociologists say. The sense of doing something and receiving favorable recognition for his worthy deeds is utterly satisfying to a young child and is all mixed up with his enjoyment of action for its own sake. He needs stories that move quickly.

In later childhood and adolescence, the young reader begins to enjoy the adventure tale, the mystery, and the career story, with their physical action and tangible achievements. But somewhere along the line the appreciation of emotional, intellectual, and moral achievements starts to grow. Then characters who conquer a bad temper or fears or lazy incompetence are appreciated. Interest in idealistic service, devotion to research or to a cause, leads children to the biographies of such people as Abraham Lincoln, George Washington Carver, Clara Barton, or Narcissa and Marcus Whitman. Biography, when it is written with integrity and a lively sense of the hero's human struggle against weaknesses and other odds, helps to satisfy the child's

hunger for achievement and stirs him to emulation.

There is also a stern negative aspect in this need to achieve. Success is not always assured, and sometimes physical handicaps or mental limitations or social barriers must be faced honestly. The individual must find satisfying substitutes or compensations. Most of us have to see other people outstrip us and still be able to appreciate their accomplishments generously while we pursue our own tasks undismayed. We must even endure failure and accept it—not with resignation as the end of everything, but as the beginning of a new and more intelligent struggle. In *Johnny Tremain* (p. 438) the hero had a rich life in spite of the maimed hand which prevented him from being the master silversmith he had expected to be. Robin, a knight's son in *The Door in the Wall* (p. 449), knew after he was lamed that he could never fulfill his father's expectation that he would be a knight. But after he learned to live with and manage his limited physical activity, he acquitted himself gallantly nevertheless. George Washington Carver became one of the world's greatest scientists in spite of poverty, frail health, and every social barrier raised against his progress. He accepted such defeats and delays as he had to, but he never gave up his almost superhuman struggles. Such heroes and heroines who accept handicaps and defeats courageously and achieve in spite of them help children in their task of growing up. For children need to learn that although achievement is always pleasant, it is perhaps most satisfying when it is reached after defeat. Growing up means growing.

## Play: the need for change

Play is sometimes classified as a part of the desire for change, which is one of the basic needs of the human organism.<sup>1</sup> If we work hard we need rest or play. If we are serious and intent we need relaxation and gaiety. So, in our reading, after grave and factual books or books about everyday affairs we like something light or imaginative. If we are beset with personal anxieties we look for a book of adventure or mystery or romance, lose ourselves completely, and come back to our own problems refreshed. "Ah, but that is reading for escape," someone protests. Of course it is a form of escape. Anything we do that lifts us out of ourselves or frees us from the doldrums is an escape, whether it is listening to music, taking a brisk walk, going to the movies, or reading a book. But what is wrong with that? Escape is reprehensible if it is a cowardly running away from responsibilities or an unwillingness to face reality, but escape becomes a sensible measure of safety when it means pausing to catch our breath on a hard climb, or beating a hasty retreat before an onrushing truck. So when pressures bear down upon us too heavily, reading may create for us a little oasis of safety or quiet or fun where we can relax, learn how to laugh again, and step forth with renewed buoyancy and courage.

Children also need such liberation. They suffer more than adults realize from the pressure of routines, adult coercion and tensions, and the necessity of conforming to a code of manners and morals whose reasonableness they do not always understand. Some children suffer from school failures, family troubles, or feelings of social or physical inferiority. They, too, seek an escape in books sometimes, and the escape will be wholesome or the reverse depending upon what they read. For instance, a little girl began to read one collection of fairy tales after another. She was

running away from unhappy competition with a brighter, prettier, older sister. She escaped to a world of fantasy where the youngest daughter, the cinder girl, always comes into her own and triumphs. Mooning over her fairy tales, the child left her room in disorder, dodged study periods, and allowed herself to become more and more untidy. She was using books, good enough in themselves, as a screen between herself and the problems she would not face. She needed help rather than censure. When that help was forthcoming and when through a series of small successes and increasing acceptance by her school group she began to find her place in the world, she turned from her fairy tales, and *Heidi* replaced "Cinderella." Stories about girls who achieved in spite of difficulties helped her in her own struggle to achieve and to belong.

A pre-adolescent boy was gravely upset when his father was sent to prison. Mother and son moved to a new neighborhood, but the boy avoided other boys and stayed at home reading one cheap magazine story after another. Then he began to blossom forth with tales of departed grandeurs, borrowed from the sensational fiction he was reading. Presently he had removed himself so completely from reality that it was difficult for him to realize that he was making things up out of whole cloth. The boy's trashy reading did not cause this behavior—shock and sorrow did that—but certainly in his time of need those lurid stories gave him neither the courage nor the insight which good literature might have supplied.

Sensational comic books, trashy reading material of any kind, may provide children with temporary forgetfulness but will give them no help with their problems. For children identify themselves with their book heroes, and when those characters are sensible, courageous human beings, young readers discover new courage in themselves, new ca-

<sup>1</sup>William E. Blatz and Helen Bott, *Parents and the Pre-school Child*, p. 114.

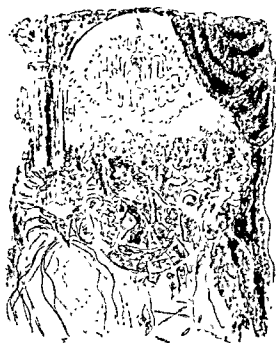


Illustration by Marcia Brown for *Cinderella* by Charles Perrault, Scribner, 1934 (original in color, book 8 x 10)

In this ballroom scene of courtly French elegance, Marcia Brown has made an interesting use of balance. The elaborate chandelier points out the dashing central figure of the prince. The handsome and homely ladies of the court, crowding to one side, serve as a foil for the loveliness of Cinderella in the foreground of the other side. Marcia Brown is famous for adapting her style to her subject matter.

capacities for competent or noble action. Such reading provides escape that is also fulfilling because it gives new insight and fortitude.

Books of many kinds may be used to meet the child's need for healthy change. The old fairy tales are full of do-and-dare heroines and heroes who accomplish impossible tasks through their good deeds, courage, and persistence. These old tales have about them, also, a dreamlike quality that is a welcome change from the everyday world of here and now. Modern fantasies provide laughter and imaginative adventures that are sometimes rib-tickling nonsense and sometimes humor with overtones of beauty. These range from the fun of Dr. Seuss' rambunctious *Scrambled Eggs Super!* to the beauty and tragedy of

Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* (p. 324), and the compassionate self-sacrifice of *Charlotte's Web* (p. 334). Absorbing adventure books such as Robert Du Soe's *Three Without Fear* or Thor Heyerdahl's dramatic tale *Kon-Tiki* are important to children and young people who may be finding life hopelessly dull or unchallenging. Fine poetry that arrests the attention and stirs the emotions, light verse and nonsense jingles now and then—these may supply a child with the inspiration or laughter for which he hungers. Our modern world, with its increased social tensions and fears, needs more than ever before the safety valve of laughter. Laughter dissolves tensions. If we can laugh together, we can live together. The person with a sense of humor (not levity) is generally a balanced, sagacious person. The literature of humor and nonsense has a therapeutic value we cannot afford to overlook in this age of material insecurity and violence. It is the responsibility of the adults who guide children's reading to help them discover books that provide an inner playground of wholesome delight to which youngsters can escape when they need this kind of change.

## The need for aesthetic satisfaction

There is another human need that seems curiously at odds with man's more utilitarian search for security and achievement. It is

the need to adorn, to make beautiful, and to enjoy beauty. The need to adorn begins primitively with the enjoyment of ornaments for



self-glorification. With many people this remains a major source of satisfaction. For others the aesthetic sense expands rapidly beyond the purely personal to include expressions of the wonder and joy of life in art—music, dancing, painting, sculpture, and literature.

Our aesthetic sense is best satisfied by the art which, using new patterns, reveals life to us with fresh significance. We respond both to the pattern and to the sense of wholeness or completeness that art gives us. Our response is often emotional rather than intellectual, or, more frequently, it is both. We call this feeling aesthetic satisfaction, the satisfaction of our hunger for harmony and beauty.

Sometimes art may deal with ugliness and tragedy. Lois Lenski has been courageous enough to give children, in her remarkable regional books (p. 422), glimpses of underprivileged families whose lives seem sordid but are glorified by love and self-respect. Whether in music, dancing, drama, story, painting, or sculpture, the artist seizes upon some aspect of life and re-creates it for us so that it is cleared of its obscurities and confusions. We see it whole and understandable; people, events, and places, however sordid, assume a new dignity beyond the mere chronicling of facts. Life is like a child's kaleidoscope; it changes too fast for us to capture the design. We are confused by the shifting colors and vanishing lines. We see this or that aspect of a man's character, but never the whole

man. The artist can give us a long, clear view so that we see details in relation to the complete design. It is as if the kaleidoscope were held immovable. The colors and lines fall into logical relationship and the design stands out in bold relief, complete and satisfying.

Men are continually seeking aesthetic satisfaction in one form or another and at varying levels of taste. One man may find it in the songs of Tin Pan Alley. Another finds it in a symphony which exalts the sorrows of life to heroic proportions. In the music he suffers grandly and is freed of pettiness. Aesthetic satisfaction comes to the small child as well as to the adult, and the development of his taste depends not only upon his initial capacities but also upon the material he encounters and upon how it is presented. When a child has chuckled over Miss Muffet and the spider, he is getting ready to enjoy Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses* (p. 132), and to progress to Walter de la Mare's poetry (p. 180). After he has been charmed with *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (p. 327), he is on his way to appreciating the humor and beauty of *The Wind in the Willows* (p. 328) and accepting the tragedy of *The Borrowers*.

Good reading can help every young human being to understand and satisfy these basic needs vicariously if not in reality. How should these books be used in order to give children the maximum enjoyment and at the same time further their insight into their own problems and the problems of other people?

## Child guidance through books

To nurture these young spirits there must be books of many kinds. And they should be strong books, written with liveliness and honesty both in content and style, rather than little juvenile tracts designed to teach this lesson or that. There have been so many of these moralistic books in the last few years that they threaten the general quality of children's books. It is the old didacticism which

breaks out like a rash in every generation.<sup>1</sup> For instance, there is the story of little Dickie or Bobbie or Jimmy who goes to kindergarten, stamps around, yells, and knocks down other people's blocks or seizes their toys. He is isolated like the bubonic plague until one day he learns to share and is, forthwith, a

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 3, p. 46.

beloved and accepted member of the group. A juvenile "how to make friends and influence people"! Or there is the story of an obnoxious boy who says he wishes he didn't have a kid sister. But when she saves him in a social emergency his attitude changes for the better. The worst of such tracts is that children accept them and immediately assume an insufferably self-righteous attitude toward the sinner. "Isn't he awful?" they say virtuously. One nine-year-old who used to complain freely of his tag-along small sister smugly pronounced the boy in the book "real bad because he ought to love his little sister." Such books may underscore a lesson, but they also encourage prigs. There are similar juvenile tracts, bogged down with preaching, in the field of race relationships. Such books, humorless and tame, offer nothing to lighten their dull didacticism. The use of such second-rate reading matter is a lamentably poor approach to guidance and, besides, crowds out first-rate books containing less obvious lessons.

There is also considerable danger in giving a child a book dealing with his particular behavior problem. In the process of growing older, a child may be confronted with pressures and problems too difficult for him to sustain or solve. As a result, he may lapse into temper tantrums or timid withdrawal or aggressiveness. To give such a child, already harassed, a story about a hero who conquers a similar fault may simply make the child more self-conscious or so resentful of the virtuous example of the book that he turns with increased fervor to the uninhibited excitement of television or the comics. A child going through one of these temporary periods of rebellion or withdrawal needs to discover books so absorbing and exciting, so alight with adventure or warmth or satisfying accomplishment, that he is heartened in his own struggle to achieve and encouraged to believe that life is worth while in spite of its limitations. This is one form of indirect guidance, giving the child new courage and a stronger delight in life by means of strong books. Another method of guidance is through informal

discussions of the problems these books involve, rather than of the child's own personal difficulties.

For instance, a group of children were discussing Elizabeth Enright's story of *Kintu*,<sup>1</sup> the son of an African chief, who was good at spear throwing and the language of the drums but was secretly afraid of the jungle. When the witch doctor gave him a charm to bury in the jungle in order to cure his fear, Kintu buried the charm but lost his way and had to spend the night in the trees. He saved himself from death by killing a leopard with his spear and afterwards discovered that he was no longer afraid of the jungle. The teacher asked the children what they thought cured Kintu of his fear—was it the charm? The children said "No," emphatically, and one child added, "That charm was just an old plum stone and I think the witch doctor gave it to Kintu so he'd have to go into the jungle and maybe stay there."

"Well, then, what cured him?" the teacher persisted.

The children discussed the question and concluded that after Kintu took action against the leopard he feared, and found that he could take care of himself in the jungle, he wasn't afraid any more. The teacher agreed and asked, "Have any of you been afraid of something when you were younger that you aren't afraid of any more?"

There were plenty of responses—the dark, dogs, deep water—and a common fear was of a new school with strange children and teachers. Then the teacher led the children to tell how they got over their fears. The mother of the child who was afraid of the dark had played a game with her night after night until she could locate everything in her room in the dark and could even go around the house and find things quickly without any light. The children who were afraid of a new school felt that they might not be "up with the other

<sup>1</sup>This book, which unfortunately is out of print at this time, may perhaps be available in large libraries and is reprinted in *Time for True Tales*, compiled by May Hill Arbuthnot, Scott, Foresman, 1961.

kids" in arithmetic or reading, or that the teachers might not be friendly. They weren't afraid when they found the children and teachers friendly and they themselves better in some subjects even if they weren't so good in others. After considerable discussion with some teacher guidance, they arrived at these conclusions: first, that at some time or other everyone is afraid of something, and second, to get over a foolish fear, you must do something about it. When you find you can take care of yourself, then you aren't afraid. Undoubtedly, there were still children in that group with fears, but here was a casual, impersonal kind of guidance by way of a book character that the children had thoroughly enjoyed. Incidentally, although both text and pictures make it clear that Kintu was a Negro boy, that aspect of the story was never mentioned. To these white children he was another child like themselves, with a grave and understandable problem. He could not grow up to be respected unless he could conquer his secret fear. What does color have to do with such a child or such a problem? Kintu was every inch a hero to those young readers. Such incidental guidance develops respect for peoples of other races without obvious preaching.

Many a librarian has helped children to a better appreciation of life's possibilities through reading. A librarian gave *Augustus Rides the Border* to a particularly forlorn ten-year-old, ragged, underfed, and glum. He came back grinning for the first time, and asked for more about Augustus. After the boy read several of these books, the librarian asked him why he liked Augustus so much and he said, "Oh, 'Gustus does such funny things all by himself. He has fun." They discussed the hero's adventures for a while, and finally the boy said shyly, " 'Gustus didn't have much of a home, did he? But he had fun." Now Augustus, who is really a young "Grape of Wrath," cheerful and undepressed, had given this boy a new slant on his own life. With Augustus he had both escaped and found himself. With Augustus he had re-

gained a sense of life's possible adventures and fun.

A classroom group discussed Kate's outrageous behavior in the first chapter of *The Good Master*. Of course they thoroughly enjoyed her antics, but they came to the conclusion that she behaved that way because she was "mad" at her father for sending her away, and so she took it out on her uncle's family. It was further agreed that most of us are likely to behave foolishly when we think we have been unjustly treated. They supplied some rather hair-raising examples of their own. Kate, they thought, was just lucky to have someone like her uncle to be patient with her.

Righteous anger over an injustice is one of the hardest emotions to quell, both for children and adults. If the victim broods over his grievance, it may sour his personality and prevent his happiness. It is important that children learn early that almost everyone suffers at one time or another from this difficulty. How meet it? Julia Sauer's *The Light at Tern Rock* turns on such a problem and so affords an impersonal situation for discussion. It tells the story of Ronnie and his Aunt Marthy, who find themselves marooned on the lonely Tern Rock Lighthouse. They are substitute keepers of the light and they cannot leave because the regular keeper, Byron Flagg, has deliberately broken his promise to return and take them to the mainland December fifteenth. Ronnie is furious. "Aunt Marthy, isn't a broken promise the wickedest thing on earth?" he asks. Aunt Marthy thinks maybe cruelty is much worse, cruelty to defenseless creatures. Unconvinced, Ronnie sulks, splutters about his wrongs, and nurses his anger toward Byron Flagg. Finally, Aunt Marthy announces, "...Christmas...is something in your heart. It's a feeling that doesn't go with anger and hatred. And my heart's got to be clean and ready for Christmas."

She sends Ronnie to his room, not to punish him, but to give him an opportunity to cool off and be alone. By Christmas Eve he

comes out of his sulks and climbs with Aunt Marthy up the long stairs to light the great light. As its powerful beam shines out over the lonely sea and snowflakes drift softly down, Ronnie suddenly melts; the anger and hardness leave him. He turns to Aunt Marthy in surprise at his discovery. "We've lighted a candle tonight, too," he cries, "a big one. We've lighted the biggest candle we'll ever have a chance to light for Him—to help Him on His way."

It is a wholesome conclusion, but some questions still remain which children might well discuss. Should that "mean old man," as Ronnie called him, have lied as he did? Should Ronnie forgive him? Suppose you were Ronnie and had missed all the fun he had missed, how would you greet Byron Flagg when he arrived on the Rock three days after Christmas? This would be a choice scene to dramatize, by the way, and probably every child who played the part would have a different version of Ronnie's behavior.

Certainly such discussions or dramatizations can be too moralistic unless the presiding grown-up gives the children plenty of latitude in drawing their own conclusions. Invaluable indirect guidance grew from the reading aloud of *Cheaper by the Dozen*, by Frank B. Gilbreth and Ernestine Gilbreth Carey. A young teacher had a sixth-grade group of boys and girls from about as undesirable homes as you could find. Divorce, desertion, drunkenness, and quarreling were the rule rather than the exception. The children were spellbound by the hilarious goings-on of that remarkable family. Their comments were revealing. Over and over they asked, "It is really true? Did any family ever have fun like that?" One big over-age boy commented, "A fellow wouldn't mind studying if he had a dad that helped him like that." And a girl said in surprise, "Why, those people really wanted their kids, didn't they?" Such comments gave the leader a chance not to moralize but to reassure those children.

Yes, there really was such a family and these things did happen. Families have fun together when they share work, and plan and play together. He was trying to build into their concepts of family life the idea of family love and loyalty, the family group that stays together through thick and thin. This the book accomplished for the teacher and for those children who glimpsed, perhaps for the first time, the possible satisfactions and joys of family life.

Through such informal discussions of a variety of books, a grown-up can discover more about a child's attitudes than in almost any other way. Guidance may come casually as a part of a lively difference of opinion over such humorous situations as the first chapter of *The Good Master* or some of Caddie Woodlawn's antics. Young tomboys who secretly sympathize with Caddie's aversions to the girl's rôle in life may, through Caddie's experiences, be helped to a happier acceptance of their sex. Sometimes the best guidance is no guidance at all, a hands-off policy until the storm passes or the tensions are eased. Then tales of laughter are invaluable, or stories of great adventures so absorbing that a child is carried out of himself and comes back to earth re-created. Know your child and know his books, because for every child there is the right book at the right time.

As we have seen, there are many basic human needs which the child as well as the adult is continually striving to satisfy. They are wholly personal in infancy but should grow as the child grows into a more and more generous consideration of others as well as himself. To satisfy these needs is a difficult task for any human being, and the happiness we find in life depends upon our ability to make adjustments to these basic hungers or to life's denials of them. Reading is one rich source of insight. And reading the right books can actually strengthen a child for the difficult tasks involved in growing up.

Books may be written for children, but, for the most part, it is the grown-ups who buy these books. Parents, grandparents, uncles, and aunts hasten to a bookstore to pick out a choice volume for a favorite child. Teachers and librarians exhibit books, recommend them, and otherwise guide children's reading. But upon what basis? How can any adult know what book a child is going to enjoy?

Actually, grown-ups can't know with any degree of certainty. Moreover, they must face the fact that youngsters are past masters at rejecting what is not for them. As Paul Hazard says in that delightful book of his, *Books, Children and Men*,

Children defend themselves, I tell you. They manifest at first a degree of inertia that resists the liveliest attacks; finally they take the offensive and expel their false friends from a domain in which they wish to remain the rulers. Nothing is done to create a common opinion among them and yet that opinion exists. They would be wholly incapable of defining the faults that displease them; but they cannot be made to believe that a book which displeases them should please them. Whatever their differences may be as to age, sex, or social position, they detest with common accord disguised sermons, hypocritical lessons, irreproachable little boys and girls who behave with more docility than their dolls. It is as though... they brought into the world with them a spontaneous hatred of the insincere and the false. The adults insist, the children pretend to yield, and do not yield. We overpower them; they rise up again. Thus does the struggle continue, in which the weaker will triumph.

(p. 49)

A book may be considered a juvenile classic by the experts, but if it is beyond the child's understanding or too subtle or precious



Illustration by Tasha Tudor for  
*A Child's Garden of Verses* by Robert  
Louis Stevenson, Oxford, 1947  
(original in color, book 6 x 8)

*The boy in this book is a portrait  
of little Robert Louis himself.  
Each picture is done in Tasha Tudor's  
delicate, flowery pastels and  
wreathed in symbols of the seasons.*

for his level of appreciation, he can turn it down with a stony indifference which leaves adults baffled and grieved. They needn't mourn. The child may accept that same book with enthusiasm two years later. It is the same with music. A popular song will catch a child's ear, while a symphony may only confuse him. But, as he matures and his musical experiences increase, he hears parts of the symphony, its different movements, over and over until he understands and enjoys them. Finally, when he hears the whole symphony, he can follow it with pleasure, and its great melodies sing in his memory. So some poems must be heard repeatedly, and some stories must be talked over in parts or listened to

while someone who knows and loves them reads aloud.

Through this gradual induction into better and better literature, children catch the theme and savor the beauty or the subtle humor or the meaning that eluded them at first. Sometimes a grown-up has the privilege of seeing this discovery take place. The children's faces come suddenly alive; their eyes shine. They may be anticipating an amusing conclusion or a heroic triumph. There is a sudden chuckle, or breath is exhaled like a sigh. The book has moved them to laughter or tears, but in either case there is a deep inner satisfaction, and they will turn to books again with happy anticipation.

## Guideposts for choosing books for children

It is evident from the discussion of the child's needs in Chapter 1 that the first consideration in selecting books for a special child or a group of children must be the children themselves. The needs of each child are determined in part by his background and attitudes, his abilities, and his interests. A grown-up should not feel restricted by a child's immediate interests, however, because these are often too narrow. Adults should keep children exploring both the best of the old books and the most promising of the new. Since new titles alone number from a thousand to fourteen hundred each year, the grown-up needs a few general guideposts and specific criteria to help him select wisely.

Certainly, children need books to widen their horizons, deepen their understandings, and give them sounder social insights. They also need books that minister to their meritment or deepen their appreciation of beauty. They need heroism, fantasy, and down-to-earth realism. And they need books that, in the course of a good story, help to develop clear standards of right and wrong. Finally, children's books should have those qualities of good writing that distinguish literature for any age or group of people. The special criteria for different categories of books will

be found in succeeding chapters along with evaluations of individual books, authors, and illustrators. Let's begin here with stories.

### What makes a good story for children?

Of course, a child's reading will not and should not be limited to stories, but stories are his first and most lasting literary love. He hears them with delight at three and will probably enjoy them throughout adolescence and maturity. What are the distinguishing characteristics of a well-written story? In general, children like stories with an adequate theme, strong enough to generate and support a lively plot. They appreciate memorable characters and distinctive style. Most stories which have become durable additions to children's literature have had these characteristics.

### Theme

Theme is the idea of the story—what it is all about. Occasionally the theme is implied in the title, as in *A Hero by Mistake*, which tells how a cowardly man became brave because he was mistaken for a hero and learned

## Old and modern illustrators of children's books



Illustration by Helen Sewell for *Grimm's Tales*,  
Oxford, 1954 [1883] (original in two colors,  
book 6 x 8½, picture 4¼ x 3¼)

*The work of these two outstanding artists presents a striking example of the old and the new in book illustration for children. Howard Pyle's almost photographic realism for his Robin Hood, first published in 1883, is tremendously appealing in its lively details. The two clever, laughing faces, the accurately drawn costumes, and the castle in the background all catch the eye and the imagination. But in Helen Sewell's stark, uncluttered design there is also a powerful interpretive quality. The nonchalant strolling ben and the wistful Hansel in his tiny cage tell a dramatic story. Oddly enough, Helen Sewell's early illustrations were as realistic as Pyle's. (See page 570.) In this section and throughout the text you will find examples of the work of other artists discussed in Chapter 2.*

Illustration by Howard Pyle for *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, Scribner, 1946 [1883] (book 7 x 9)



THE MERRY FRIAR CARRIETH ROBIN ACROSS THE WATER

# THE BROWNIES

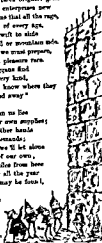
# TOBACCOGANNING



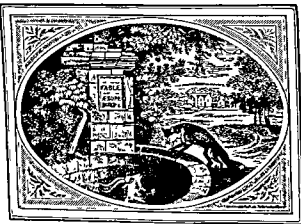
All clustered in a ring they stood  
Within the shelter of the wood,  
While earnest faces brighter grew  
At thought of enterprises new  
Said one "It seems that all the rugs,  
With human kind of every age,  
Is on toboggans swift to slide  
Down steepest hill or mountain side.  
Our plans at once we must prepare,  
And try, ourselves, that pleasure turn.  
We might enough toboggan And  
In towns, perhaps, of every kind,  
If some one chanced to know where they  
Awaiting sale are stored away."

Another spoke: "Within us lie  
The power to make our own supplies;  
We'll not depend on other hands  
To satisfy these new demands;  
The mercantile ways we'll let alone  
And make toboggans of our own,  
A lumberyard some miles from here  
Holds seasoned lumber all the year.  
There pine and cedar may be felled,  
And oak and ash are piled around.

Some boards are thick and some are  
thin,  
But all will bend like sheets of tin.  
At once we'll hasten to the spot,  
And, though a fence surrounds the lot,  
We'll skirlish 'round and persevere,  
And gain an entrance,—never fear."

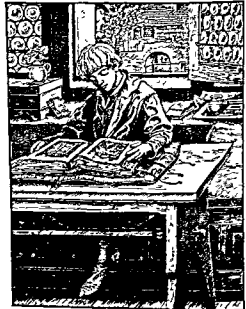


1.



1. Illustration from Palmer Cox's *The Brownies: Their Book, Century*, 1887 (book 6½ x 8¾)
2. Illustration from Thomas Bewick's *Select Fables of Aesop and Others*, 1818
3. Illustration by Arthur Hughes for *At the Back of the North Wind* by George MacDonald, Strahan, 1871
4. Illustration from Howard Pyle's *Otto of the Silver Hand*, Scribner, 1952 [1888] (book 6½ x 8¾)

2



4.



3.





5. Illustration from Walter Crane's *The Baby's Bouquet*, Routledge, 1879 (original in color, book 7 x 7)

6. Illustration by Arthur Frost for *Uncle Remus and His Friends* by Joel Chandler Harris, Houghton Mifflin, 1892 (book 4½ x 7)



Limited media, traditional perspective, and realistic details mark the work of these classic illustrators of children's books. Bewick adorned his graceful compositions with beautiful minutiae (2). Hughes drew idealized people with imagination and charm (3). Walter Crane brought color to children's books; his illustrations show Japanese influence (5). Pyle drew pictures rich in detail and polished in composition (4). American humor came into children's illustrations with Palmer Cox's brownies and Arthur Frost's pictures for *Uncle Remus* (1, 6). For examples of the work of other early illustrators, see Randolph Caldecott, pages 53 and 101; Kate Greenaway, pages 60 and 131; George Cruikshank, page 51; Sir John Tenniel, page 322; Reginald Birch, page 29; Newell Wyeth, pages 45, 300, and 468; Jessie Willcox Smith, page 452; Arthur Rackham, pages 65, 78, 84, and 241; Beatrix Potter, page 328; and Leslie Brooke, page 68.

1. Illustration from Ludwig Bemelmans' *Madeline's Rescue*, Viking, 1953 (original in two colors, book  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 12$ , picture  $7 \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ )



1.

2. Illustration by Feodor Rojankovsky for *Frog Went a-Courtin'* by John Langstaff, Harcourt, Brace, 1955 (original in color, book  $8\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ )



When upon his high horse set,  
His hoofs they shone as black as jet.

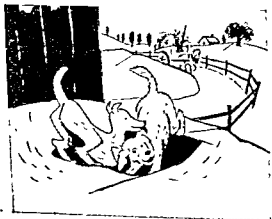
2.



3

3. Illustration by Jean Charlot for *Puppy Seeds* by Clyde Bulla, Crowell, 1955 (book  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 9$ , picture  $6\frac{1}{2} \times 4$ )

4. Illustration by Nicolas Mardvinnoff for *Finders Keepers* by William Lipkind, Harcourt, Brace, 1951 (book  $7\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ , picture  $7\frac{1}{4} \times 6\frac{1}{4}$ )

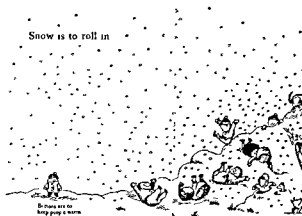


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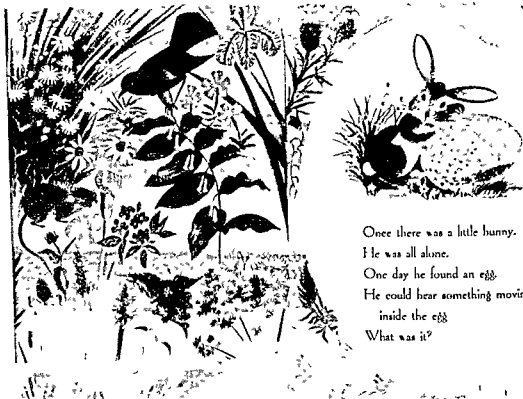


5 Illustration by Maurice Sendak for *What Can You Do with a Shoe?* by Beatrice Schenk de Regniers, Harper, 1955 (book 10¼ x 5½)

Many present day illustrators have moved away from prettified pictures. Their freer compositions make bold use of space and omit details. They show humor by exaggeration or by a tongue-in cheek gravity. Bemelmans' astonished *Madeline*, Rojankovsky's absurd frog, Mordvinoff's homely dogs, and Sendak's antic children are all wonderful examples of humorous exaggeration (1, 2, 4, 5, 6). Simplification is evident in Charlot's line drawing, which presents only the most essential details. His squat figures show the influence of early Mayan bas relief, simple and strong (3). For examples of the work of some other modern illustrators discussed in Chapter 2 see Conrad Buff, pages 463, 470, and 557; Marcia Brown, pages 10, 267, and 308; Garth Williams, pages 306 and 432; Wanda Gág, pages 318 and 550; Virginia Burton, pages 76, 340, and 414; Robert McCloskey, pages 464 and 582; Katherine Milhous, page 35; Wesley Dennis, pages 467 and 523, and Edward Ardizzone, page 400.



6 Illustration by Maurice Sendak for *A Hole Is to Dig* by Ruth Krauss, Harper, 1952 (book 4½ x 6¼)



Once there was a little bunny.  
He was all alone.  
One day he found an egg.  
He could hear something moving  
inside the egg  
What was it?

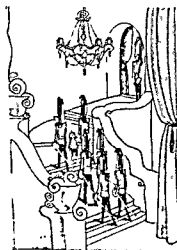
1.



1. Illustration by Leonard Weisgard for *The Golden Egg Book* by Margaret Wise Brown, Simon and Schuster, 1947 (original in color, book 9 1/4 x 13)

2. Illustration from Marguerite de Angeli's *Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes*, Doubleday, 1954 (book 8 1/2 x 12, picture 7 x 5)

2.

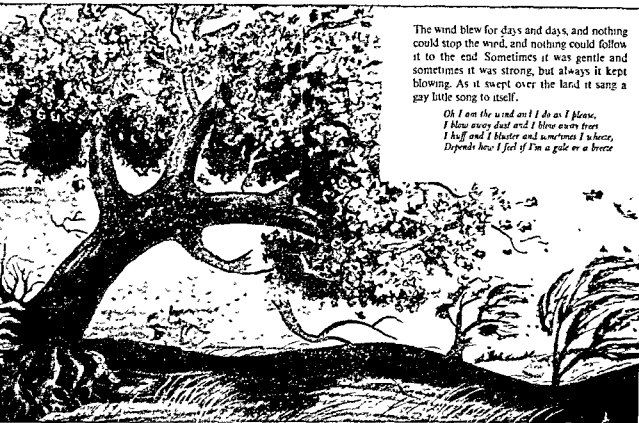


3.

4.

3. Illustration by Lea Politz for *At the Palace Gates* by Helen Rand Parish, Viking, 1949 (original in color, book 6 1/4 x 9 3/4)

4. Illustration by Nicolas Mardvinoff for *Chaga* by William Upkind, Harcourt, Brace, 1955 (original in color, book 7 1/4 x 10 1/4)



The wind blew for days and days, and nothing could stop the wind, and nothing could follow it to the end. Sometimes it was gentle and sometimes it was strong, but always it kept blowing. As it swept over the land it sang a gay little song to itself.

*Oh I am the wind and I do as I please,  
I blow away dust and I blow away tears  
I huff and I bluster and sometimes I wheeze,  
Depends how I feel if I'm a gale or a breeze*

5. Illustration by Roger Duvoisin for *Follow the Wind* by Alvin Tresselt, Lothrop, 1950 (original in color, book 8 x 9 1/4)

6. Illustration from Boris Artzybasheff's *Seven Simeons*, Viking, 1937 (original in color, book 8 1/2 x 11 1/4)

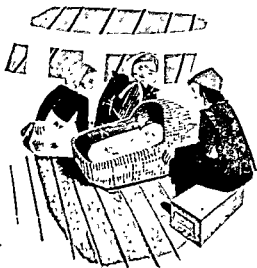
Leonard Weisgard's and Roger Duvoisin's double-page illustrations show text and design united. In Weisgard's picture the text appears in an egg-shaped oval set on a colorful background of flowers (1). Duvoisin has tucked the text for his illustration into the corner toward which the wind blows, its violence revealed by bending trees and struggling people (5). Compared with this earthy vigor, Artzybasheff's illustration has the airiness of a dream. In red, gold, and green, this is a glorious picture, all lightness and movement. Fine, intricate lines are characteristic of the great designer Artzybasheff (6). To the left is a drawing by Marguerite de Angeli, illustrating "Ring-a-ring o' roses." Her pictures are full of lovely details which children enjoy discovering (2). Then there are Politi's small boy escorted by huge, pompous guards, and Mordvinoff's proud elephant, Chaga, shown silhouetted against the night sky (3, 4).





1.

Lynd Ward's magnificent picture of a docile but ungainly bear and a determined boy has a droll humor that tells the whole story (1). In the same way, every detail in the D'Aulaires' picture tells something significant about Ben (2). The Sewell Thanksgiving Story and the Du Bois Twenty-One Balloons both make exhilarating use of space, but Sewell's children are substantial, while Du Bois' airy balloonists are obviously fantasy (3, 4).

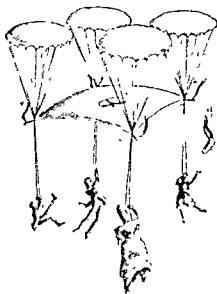


3.

1. Illustration from Lynd Ward's *The Biggest Bear*, Houghton Mifflin, 1952 (book 7½ x 10½)
2. Illustration from Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire's *Benjamin Franklin*, Doubleday, 1950 (original in color, book 8 x 10½)
3. Illustration by Helen Sewell for *Thanksgiving Story* by Alice Dalgliesh, Scribner, 1954 (original in color, book 8 x 10)
4. Illustration from William Pène du Bois' *Twenty-One Balloons*, Viking, 1947 (book 5¼ x 9)



2.



4.

to behave like one. *The Good Master* is the story of the gentling of a badly behaved little hoyden by the patience of the kindly master of the house. More often, the theme must be sought in the development of the story. *The Ark* tells of a family's search for security after the storms of war....and now *Miguel* is about one boy's struggle to attain status—acceptance as a responsible, mature person. But whatever the theme, it must be adequate, for a weak one results in a flabby story without unity or climax, a story which leaves the reader feeling "so what?" On the other hand, a strong theme will support a vigorous plot with action, suspense, and a clear-cut conclusion.

### Plot

Good plots, then, grow out of strong themes—in fact, plot is the action of a story built around the theme. Adults may like a stream-of-consciousness novel or a quiet character study, but not children. They want heroes who have obstacles to overcome, conflicts to settle, difficult goals to win. It is the vigorous action in pursuit of these goals that keeps young readers racing along from page to page to find out how the hero achieves his ends. But achieve he must, in some way or other. All-round defeat is intolerable to youth, and rightly so, since youth is essentially the time for building both the courage to try difficult tasks and the faith to believe that high endeavor will succeed when properly reinforced with industry, planning, and persistence. In adult fiction it is possible to have a strong theme with little action or plot development, but in a child's book the two generally go hand in hand.

### Characters

Significant as theme and plot are to first-rate juveniles, the characters in the story are equally important. It is true that children go through a stage during which mere tales of

action, peopled with stereotypes, satisfy them. And adult readers of pulp fiction seem never to have emerged from this period. But, happily, most children recover and want characters which are not merely stereotypes of bravery or beauty but real flesh-and-blood individuals, unique and memorable. The story may be realistic or fantastic, but the characters must be convincing. Mary Poppins is no more realistic than Cinderella, but Cinderella is a type, whereas Mary Poppins is a severe and crusty individual no child ever forgets. Wilbur, the "radiant pig" in *Charlotte's Web*, and Toad of Toad Hall in *The Wind in the Willows* are just as real to children as is Caddie Woodlawn, the red-headed tomboy. Long after details of plot have been forgotten, children and adults will recall with a chuckle or a warm glow of affection such characters as Jo in *Little Women*, Long John Silver, Heidi, Henry Huggins, Miguel, and dozens of other salty book characters. And it is through such well-drawn individuals that children gain new insight into their own personal problems and their ever widening relationships with other people.

### Style

Finally, there is the matter of style, difficult to define, an unknown quality to children and yet one to which they respond as surely as they respond to a smile. In all too many juveniles, style is conspicuous by its absence, which accounts for the depressing mediocrity of so many books for children. How define style? In his *Handbook of Short Story Writing* John Frederick gives a definition which is somewhat oversimplified, but adequate. He says,

To me, style is simply the auditory or sensory element in prose. . . . In this sense, one listening to the intelligent reading aloud of a totally unknown language will receive the impressions which go to make up style. Style is the music of prose. . . . The student of style must read aloud, and listen to others read, both good and bad prose. (pp. 62-63)

Read aloud some children's books, and you will soon discover many with beautiful pictures or admirable ideas but stories that are somehow flat to hear and insipid to speak. They may be repetitious, awkward, labored, too cute, or obviously moralistic. In contrast, the dialogue of *Charlotte's Web* or *Winnie-the-Pooh*, the dramatic, blood-chilling narrative of *Treasure Island*, the magical mood of the old fairy tales, or the humorous patter of Dr. Seuss falls from the tongue and pleases the ear with apparently effortless grace. Children do not know what charms them, but whether they are hearing one of these books read aloud or eagerly reading it themselves, the style in which it is written facilitates their understanding and is an added, if unrecognized, element of delight.

In searching for children's fiction that is most worth while, look first for a substantial theme upon which a lively plot can develop. Ask yourself what the book is about. Does it leave children with an added insight into their own problems or the problems of other people? Is the plot or action of the story absorbing, and does it add to the children's zest for living, their feeling that life is good and may be wonderful? Consider the *characters* in the story—are they well drawn, unique and unforgettable? And will they contribute to the child's "reverence for life ... all life capable of development," as Albert Schweitzer says? Finally, is the prose *style* forthright? Children are confused by ambiguity or too much whimsy. Has the style humor or beauty or those elements of the dramatic which are appropriate to the story? Is the dialogue good? Are the words natural rather than stilted? In short, does the text read well? Even though a book does not measure up to every one of these standards, if it has particular values for a particular child, consider it, of course. These guides are naturally generalizations. Wide reading at all levels and careful observation of children's reactions to stories will help grownups to make wise choices in guiding young readers to worth-while fiction.

Many children like biography as much as they like stories, and the same criteria can be used for biographies as for fiction. But there are other points to consider. A biography should be true to all the facts known about the subject's life, and it should treat its subject objectively. The documentation which is sometimes included in prefaces, footnotes, or bibliographies will mean little to children, but it will help adults to choose books which are authentic. Of course the hero of a biography must be heroic in stature, but he should be a real-life hero, with real-life faults, weaknesses, and doubts. Chapter 18 has a discussion of biography, including criteria for the selection of good biographical books.

Criteria for books of information will be found in Chapter 19. The most important standard for informational books is scrupulous accuracy. But informational books can be chosen with an eye to style, too. No need to repel children with dull books when there are so many both lively and reliable, with fascinating illustrations as well.

Poetry, of course, has its own special standards. Most important are the melody and movement which, more than any other qualities, distinguish it from prose or from doggerel. Its words, too, are important. They may be exciting new words or everyday words used in new ways and combinations, but they must not be pedestrian. The rhymes must seem appropriate, not just convenient. The whole poem should give fresh significance to life. More detailed and specific standards for children's poetry can be found in Chapters 4 through 10.

These criteria will mean more when you begin to appraise children's books with a critical eye. Turn back to them when you are considering a new book. It is not necessary that everything the child enjoys be a literary masterpiece, but it is the responsibility of adults who guide a child's reading to see that he is exposed to many books of literary merit and lasting value.



## What about illustrations?

Beautiful format and illustrations are among the most striking characteristics of modern books for children. Bright colors or tender pastels, quaint old-fashioned pictures or arresting modern designs—all clamor for attention. Even black and white drawings or pen and ink sketches have a drollery or a charm that carries the older generation back to its own childhood. So potent is the spell of the modern illustrator of juveniles that his pictures sometimes sell a poor book, while an unattractive format may consign a fine book to retirement on the shelves of bookstores and libraries. Publishers know well the effect of gay-looking books. Grocery stores and newsstands are selling literally thousands of books for children on the strength of their eye-catching colors. Some of these are worth buying, but many of them are trivial in content and pictorially worthless. Temporary pacifiers in book form!

The crudities of the comics and of the advertisements and pictures in some of the slick magazines also confront children. How can we help to immunize them against the banal and vulgar and lead them into an increasing enjoyment of a variety of authentic styles and media? Only by exposing them to fine examples of graphic arts old and new. For, as Bertha Mahony says in *Illustrators of Children's Books*, "...art in children's books is a part of all art, not an isolated special field. In every period the greatest artists have shared in it." But again, in the evaluation of illustrations as in the evaluation of stories, the child himself must be the starting point if we are to meet his needs.

### What the child demands of illustrations

He begins as a stern literalist, demanding an obviously truthful interpretation of the text. If the hero is red-headed no child is going to accept a brown topknot without protest. If

Ludwig Bemelmans says there are twelve little girls who go walking from Madeline's school, the child counts to see that the artist has put them all in (p. 20).

Happily, when it comes to fantasy, even young children forget their literalness. They accept all the cozy details of Caldecott's *Frog He Would A-Wooing Go* (p. 53) or Beatrix Potter's neat little fireside interior for *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (p. 328) as readily as they follow the everyday drama of weather in Roger Duvoisin's pictures for *Alvin Tresselt's Follow the Wind* (p. 23) or *Sun Up*. If the illustrations interpret the story, the child will take to his heart such varied techniques as the splashy colors of Nicolas Mordvinoff's *Chaga* (p. 22), Robert Lawson's finely detailed pen and ink sketches of landscapes and small animals (p. 333), and Arthur Rackham's inimitable gnomes, witches, wee folk, and strangely human trees (p. 65).

Being literal, the young child also wants a picture synchronized precisely with the text. When *Make Way for Ducklings* has the mother duck leading her offspring across a busy Boston thoroughfare, the child is glad that Robert McCloskey placed his unforgettable picture with the description and not a page or two later (p. 464). Even older children are irked by illustrations that appear before or after the episode they are supposed to represent.

Children are as fond of action in pictures as in stories. They delight in the dancing elves that Cruikshank drew so long ago for "The Elves and the Shoemaker" (p. 51). And they love Ernest Shepard's gay action drawings of the skipping Christopher Robin, the flight of Virginia Kahl's impulsive Wolfgang, and the droll, carefree abandon of Maurice Sendak's capering children (p. 21). Decidedly, children like action pictures as well as action plots.

We know they also like bright colors, but not to the exclusion of muted hues or blacks

and whites. A nursery school staff tried color choices in clothes and in picture books and were surprised to find no conclusive preference for primary colors. To be sure, the brilliant reds and clear blues the Petershams so frequently employ in their pictures are always eye-catching, but apparently children also respond happily to the gentle colors in Tasha Tudor's (p. 70) and Marguerite de Angeli's (p. 22) pictures for *Mother Goose*. On the whole, there is some evidence that children do prefer colors to black and white. Yet nothing could add to the young child's delight in Lynd Ward's powerful blacks and whites for *The Biggest Bear* (p. 24) or the older children's pleasure in the fine, clear minutiae of William Pène du Bois' drawings for his *Twenty-One Balloons* (p. 24) or *The Giant*.

Small children are not supposed to see details in a picture, but they do. For the older generation, half the charm of the Palmer Cox Brownie books lay in their details. The pictures seemed to have hundreds of Brownies, each doing something different (p. 18), but

every child immediately looked for his favorites, the Dude or the Policeman or the Cowboy. So children today look for the bespectacled twins or the Negro child in Elizabeth Orton Jones' group of children at play in *Small Rain* (p. 571). But the same youngster who will gloat over small details in a picture may also enjoy the bold, uncluttered strength of a single figure by Rockwell Kent (p. 252), the fluffiness of a small kitten by Clare Newberry (p. 472), or the sharp, clear outline of Artzybasheff's *Fairy Shoemaker* (p. 184).

Children, then, begin with a few rigid canons about pictures in their books and will accept crude drawing or saccharine prettiness placidly if it tells a story. But, with continuous exposure to authentic art of many varieties, their response to pictures expands and their taste improves. The captions for the illustrations reproduced throughout this book comment on the styles, techniques, and materials of the artists. They will help to guide adults in choosing children's books with worth-while illustrations.

## Early illustrators of children's books

### In England

In spite of the overwhelming yearly publication of beautiful new books for children and an increasing number of new and talented young illustrators, it is still important to show children some of the pictures by artists of the past who were gifted innovators in the field of children's books. Unfortunately, all too many of their books have been allowed to go out of print, and frequently the only copies available are to be found in large libraries.

In England Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) is credited with the invention of the white line which gave greater delicacy and shading to his woodcuts. But to the layman it is the graceful composition of his landscapes and

the beauty of his birds and beasts in lovely settings that make his illustrations for *Aesop's Fables* memorable (p. 18). The flowing rhythms of William Blake's engravings on copper plates and the comic absurdities of Edward Lear's cartoons for his nonsense verses are discussed later in this book (Chapters 6 and 8). Both were innovators, one in a romantic and one in a humorous vein. But of even greater importance are the remarkable illustrations George Cruikshank (1792-1878) made for the Grimms' *Collection of German Popular Stories*. His fine drawing was matched by a lively sense of humor and an imagination that made elves, fairies, and fairy tale action as alive and convincing as a modern scene. Sir John Tenniel (1820-1914) had the same mastery of drawing and the ability to

catch and interpret the writer's mood and meaning, but in his classic illustrations for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (p. 322) there is far less action than in Cruikshank's pictures. Arthur Hughes' (1832-1915) pictures for George MacDonald's books and Christina Rossetti's *Sing Song* have a dream-like beauty. In Canada, Palmer Cox (1840-1924) was showing the way to the modern picture-story with his amusing Brownie books, which today's children would probably like just as well as the earlier generation did, were the books available.

Edmund Evans (1826-1905), a pioneer in color printing, was the man who drew Walter Crane (1845-1915) (p. 238) into an experiment in making colorful picture books for young children. Crane used flat colors and simple, striking compositions that showed Japanese influence. His *Sleeping Beauty Picture Book*, *Baby's Bouquet*, *Baby's Own Aesop*, and *This Little Pig Picture Book* are beautiful in design and have a dramatic story-telling quality.

Kate Greenaway (1846-1901) (p. 130) and Randolph Caldecott (1846-1886) (p. 101) were friendly rivals. He admired the grace and charm of her children's figures, her landscapes and flowers, and she never ceased to wonder at the fertility of his imagination and his humor. Both used delicate, pastel colors.

Leslie Brooke's (1862-1940) (pp. 68, 115) pictures have a remarkable storytelling quality, whether they show us Johnny Crow the polite host and his friends, or the five little pigs. Beatrix Potter's (1866-1943) gallery of small, beguiling beasts recorded in clear water colors is as beloved today as it ever was. (See p. 327.)

Illustration by Reginald Birch for *Little Lord Fauntleroy* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, Scribner, 1955 (book 5½ x 7¾)

Here is the romantic realism of an earlier school of art. Notice the luxurious room, and see how the artist has made the boy's slight figure sturdy in spite of the laces he wears.

Arthur Rackham (1867-1939) was a master of line and composition, painstaking in characterization and gifted with an eerie other-worldliness. Incidentally, Rackham knew his folklore, and his little people are never gauzy-winged pretties, but the grim, homely earth folk of authentic folk tales. His colors range from pale to warm, rich hues.

### Illustrators in the United States

Meanwhile, there were some good artists at work in the United States, but Howard Pyle (1853-1911) (p. 316) eclipsed them all: he not only wrote and illustrated many books, but also taught other illustrators. In his detailed pen and ink pictures there is often a somber sense of the tragic, or a beautiful suggestion of medieval pomp and pageantry, or a wealth of homely details that make the period understandable.

What Pyle lacked in humor his good friend Arthur Frost (1851-1928) (p. 19) more than made up for. Whether Br'er Rabbit is "sashaying" down the road in those patched and droopy old pants of his or sizing up his enemy, old Br'er Fox, or talking turkey to the Tar Baby, he is a picture of rural shrewdness and humor. To compare him with Robert



Lawson's Little Georgie and his friends is to see two artists of different periods using animals to satirize the human race. But in both cases, what splendid characterizations and beautiful drawing!

Jessie Willcox Smith (1863-1935), a student of Pyle's, was greatly beloved for the pictures she made for Mother Goose and *A Child's Garden of Verses*. Her colors are soft, her children idealized and all alike, but her pictures have an old-fashioned grace and a wistful appeal that we find in Tasha Tudor's delicate pictures today.

### Recent illustrators of children's books

A brief survey cannot do justice to modern illustrators of children's books. A few of them have already been mentioned; others who are both artists and writers will be considered in detail in later chapters (see index). But there are certain contemporary illustrators who merit special mention.

One of our gifted artists, Henry C. Pitz, in *A Treasury of American Book Illustration*, calls attention to the fact that the work of Pyle and Birch followed the English tradition closely. But, with Boris Artzybasheff, Wanda Gág, and others, illustrations in American children's books began to reflect the multiple influences of its multiple population strains. The fine, intricate lines of Boris Artzybasheff's *Seven Simeons* (p. 23) are too complex for the average child, but to the sensitive eye of the artist, the art lover, and the special child, that book remains one of the most unusual and beautiful ever designed for children. The sparing use of color makes each touch of it dramatic. Mr. Artzybasheff made a striking series of pictures for the *Fairy Shoemaker* and *Aesop's Fables*, but has by now pretty much deserted the children's field.

Over the years no one has produced a more varied offering than Helen Sewell. Her early Bible pictures are grave and monumental (p. 570). The pictures for her book of myths represent a new technique. Sharp lines give an effect of action, so that the pictures seem to

Reginald Birch's (1856-1943) black and white illustrations for *Little Lord Fauntleroy* (p. 29) made him famous. The manly sturdiness of the small boy and the huge dog confronting the dour old grandfather showed his gift for dramatic characterization.

Newell Wyeth (1882-1945) (p. 480), another of Pyle's outstanding pupils, brought to children's pictures a sense of the heroic in line and color. His pictures are often three-dimensional in effect. His fertile imagination made him one of the greatest illustrators of the not-too-distant past.

be recorded movements of the dance, a kind of ballet. To illustrate *Grimm's Tales* she and her collaborator, Madeline Gekiere have used a modern approach, far removed from realism. Miss Gekiere uses fine line drawings, while Miss Sewell uses heavy, broad brush strokes quite unlike anything else she has ever done (p. 17). Whether children will accept this abstract type of picture remains to be seen, but the interpretation of mood and meaning is invariably true. Miss Sewell's angry *Three Kings of Saba* have a stone-like unyielding form until they see the Child, when their lines bend and curve with new gentleness. She has illustrated Alice Dalgliesh's *Thanksgiving Story* with warm color (p. 24). But in whatever vein this gifted artist draws or paints, she does so with the eye of the spirit, interpreting inner meaning as well as outward appearance.

Lynd Ward's pictures have a curiously three-dimensional effect, whether it is Johnny struggling with his *Biggest Bear* or Paul Revere galloping down roads so coldly moonlit that you can almost feel the mist rising from the river (p. 24). Best of all, he illumines his historical figures with a tender, homespun quality that is also heroic.

One of the great colorists today is Feodor Rojankovsky. His people are plain folk, and he uses earth browns and reds, the deep blue of skies, and decorative peasant designs to



Now the lion  
began to hear the joyous sounds of a military march.  
He turned around the next corner,  
and there was the town band, marching down the street  
between two lines of people.  
Ratatatum ratata ratatatum ratatata boom boom.

Before the lion could even nod and say, "Bonjour,"  
the music became screams and yells.  
What a hubbub!  
Musicians and spectators tumbled into one another  
in their flight toward doorways and sidewalk cafes.  
Soon the street was empty and silent.



Illustration by Roger Duvoisin for *The Happy Lion* by Louise Fatio, Whittlesey House (McGraw), 1954 (book 8 x 10)  
A baffled lion and a band in headlong flight—Duvoisin's pen has created a hilarious situation.

portray them. His *Tall Book of Mother Goose* (p. 69) and *Tall Book of Nursery Tales* are favorites, and his pictures of *Frog Went a-Courtin'* (Caldecott Medal) (p. 20) delight children.

Conrad Buff is primarily a painter of landscapes, deeply concerned with problems of light. He records it brilliantly: the burning light of a western desert, the cold icy gleam on distant mountain peaks, or the dim, flickering light in deep forests where a deer is hardly discernible. His illustrations for *Dancing Cloud* show desert colors that will brighten the darkest room. *Kobi* and *The Apple and the Arrow* give wonderful glimpses of his native Alps, and *Magic Marze* (p. 418) has the brilliant sunlight and warm colors of the native Guatemalan markets.

Roger Duvoisin is a stylist of subtle elegance and amazing output. His colors are clear and beautiful, his lines sharp and telling, his pictures somewhat stylized. But

whether it is an Indian stalking into Plymouth (p. 565), the Happy Lion visiting, or Flash out for a stroll, the action and intent of the figures are unmistakable. And so with his backgrounds—intimate details of the French village where the lion went walking become familiar, as do the rural scenes in the weather books he has illustrated for Alvin Tresselt. Through Roger Duvoisin's illustrations for such books as *Follow the Wind* (p. 23) and *White Snow, Bright Snow* (Caldecott Medal), a child watches the drama of weather unfold, not as a terrifying event, but as just a little everyday miracle.

Jean Charlot is an artist about whom there is considerable disagreement. His admirers speak of his strong, sparse lines, his heroic, rough-hewn figures, his symbolic simplicity. Others dislike his frequent use of foreshortened figures. But all can admire his pictures for *Our Lady of Guadalupe* by Helen Parish for the richness of his colors, the simple

strength of his compositions, and his fidelity to the spirit of the legend. Children like his pictures for Clyde Bulla's *Poppy Seeds*, which have a strange, calm beauty precisely right for the story.

Leo Politi paints pictures which are deceptively simple, almost primitive. Both his figures and his landscapes are stylized, but the total composition makes a beautiful design and has warmth and grace. His children are colorful and appealing, whether it is *Little Leo* in his Indian suit capering gaily with his friends through Italian streets, or the frightened hero of *At the Palace Gates*. Children love *Juanita* with its Blessing of the Animals. And children need the gentleness and decorative grace of Leo Politi's pictures.

Marcia Brown varies her colors and her style with her subjects. Flat pinks, lemon yellows, and contrasting colors, light and dark, are precisely right for her own *Henry—Fisherman*. *Dick Whittington* is a sturdy figure in a book of warm gold and black. *Puss in Boots* is in flamboyant pinks with gay greens and yellows, and figures right out of Versailles (p. 308). *Cinderella*, too, is as French as the Perraults (p. 10). The *Steadfast Tin Soldier* is in a minor key throughout—dim blues and lavenders, with the little dancer a tiny elegant figure in white. Marcia Brown has made a real contribution to children's books by lifting single fairy tales out of the anonymity of big collections and giving them the emphasis of her colorful interpretations.

Leonard Weisgard uses glorious colors and makes a beautiful composition of a single page. His *Golden Egg Book* (p. 22) shows every move of a thoughtful baby rabbit investigating a mysterious egg. There are woodsy end papers in dark greens of wonderful depth, with daisies, ferns, gentians, violets, field mice, and birds. For his *Courage of Sarah Noble* the pictures are appropriately substantial in browns and black. But for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* Weisgard has made pictures of such extraordinary beauty and perceptiveness that they deserve a place of honor with Tenniel's. Fine as Tenniel's beautifully

drawn figures are for this tale of logical madness, Weisgard's color-drenched pages enrich it, too, and should be better known.

Another young artist who merits special mention is Nicolas Mordvinoff of the "Will (William Lipkind) and Nicolas" team. The first book these two did together was *The Two Reds*, an amusing bit of action by a red cat and a red-headed boy. Their second book, *Finders Keepers*, won the Caldecott Medal. *Even Steven*, *Christmas Bunny*, *Circus Ruckus*, and *Chaga* followed in rapid succession. The bold pictures, full of movement, suit Will's stories admirably. Whether it is young Red going over a high fence with the enemy gang in full pursuit or Siegfried the bear leaping into a pond and scattering goldfish in every direction, covering two pages with whizzing lines, the drawing is strong and sure. Mr. Mordvinoff's work is an antidote for the too-pretty pictures which often afflict children's books. Most of his people and animals are homely critters and have about them the unconscious humor of the misguided earnestly doing the wrong thing.

This is just a sampling of some of the fine contemporary artists. There are many others deserving mention, for instance Garth Williams, for his dramatic pictures for the Wilder books; Louis Darling, for his amusing sketches of Henry Huggins and his friends (p. 405); and Katherine Milhous, for her decorative use of Pennsylvania Dutch colors and designs in her *Egg Tree* (Caldecott winner) (p. 35) and other books. Delightful also are the lovely water colors Helen Stone has made for the books of Phyllis McGinley, and Hildegard Woodward's for *Roger and the Fox* by Lavinia Davis. Then there are Edward Ardizzone's wonderful seascapes for his *Little Tim* books, Zhenya Gay's drawings of children and small animals (p. 128), and the captivating humor of Maurice Sendak's children; and of course, Wesley Dennis' satisfying pictures of the horses Marguerite Henry writes about so thrillingly (p. 477).

Children have a capacity for enjoying many kinds of authentic art, just as they en-

joy many varieties of books. It is a matter of exposing them to what is good art or good literature and letting them explore on their own. They may come up with some trash

now and then, but if they do, be patient. Keep giving them good books and forgive them any aversion to your favorites. You will see their taste gradually improve.

## Physical aspects of a child's book

If the content and illustrations of a child's book are of first importance, format should also be considered. The books of children under six lead a rough life at best and survive only if sturdily made. Even the books of older children suffer more wear and tear than adult books. Children reread their favorites as adults rarely do. A beloved book goes to bed with a small child, to camp with an older child, and is generally lugged around and enjoyed at odd moments in odd places.

If a picture-story for the small fry is to last through many readings, it should be cloth-bound with sturdy covers and firm stitching. Stout books with substantial paper are a comfort to young children, who like to pore over their picture books by themselves if the pages are easy to turn and hard to tear.

The size is another consideration. For the child under six, most books should not be too big or too heavy for him to handle by himself. But, oddly enough, he does occasionally enjoy a book that he has to stand over at a table, leaning on his elbows. Or you will see him putting a huge *Mother Goose* on the floor, lying down comfortably on his stomach, propped up on his elbows again, and browsing happily. Older boys and girls are much the same. Most of their books should be easy to hold and to read. But older children will take, too, big science books or oversize art books whose large pictures add to the enjoyment and understanding of the text. Such books they should be taught to use on tables, both for their own comfort and for the preservation of the books.

The size of the type and the spacing and number of words to a page are also important in a child's book. Even with the picture-story

for the non-reader, fine, adult-sized type is undesirable. The printed words should be well spaced and in large enough type to attract the child's eye. Somewhere around five he begins to associate those printed symbols with word-meanings, and one fine day he will recognize some particular word and be thrilled with his achievement. Reading has begun! On the other hand, boys and girls in the middle or upper grades of school will shy away from a book with large type. "Baby stuff!" they say at first glance. But children of all ages have one suspicion in common. They are afraid of a book page with too solid a printed pattern. Too many words to a page make the older child turn hastily to books with more conversation or shorter paragraphs. And one three-year-old, bored with too many words, explanatory and descriptive, commanded the adult sternly, "Don't read the writing, read the pictures!"

It is never too early to teach children the proper care of their books. Clean hands are the first requisite for handling books, and those hands, however small, should be taught to treat books carefully. A bookcase of his own is highly desirable, but, lacking that, a child should have a special shelf in the grown-ups' bookcases for his volumes. There they should be placed when he is through reading them, and there he should find them, uncluttered with adult magazines or papers, when he wants them. Willful destruction or excessively careless treatment of books should be corrected, but with exceeding caution. Accidents do happen, to books as well as clothes. Let grown-ups remember that tragic episode in *Cotton in My Sack* when Joanda drops a treasured book and doesn't dare go back to

school. After all, one book mislaid or accidentally injured should not frighten a child

away from books. Its loss might make him value books more deeply.

## Books for a child's own library

Grown-ups complain that it is hard to choose books for a child's own collection when books are so expensive and so soon outgrown. But if a book is so beloved by a child that he wants it over and over again, and cherishes it even after he has outgrown it, that book is not an extravagant investment. This point is brought out in Julia Sauer's *Mike's House*, the story of a little boy who loved Virginia Burton's *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* so much that he took it out of the library every time he went there and even called the library "Mike's House," because the book lived there. That child should have owned his own copy because it still held meaning for him after many readings. Even if he had tired of it in six months, it would still have been a good investment if by way of it he had discovered the fascination of books.

Young mothers and fathers of today tell about their childhood favorites which they have saved and are sharing with their children. They may even reread some of these books themselves, as a young woman graduate student did. In bed with a cold and too miserable to work, she reread *Master Simon's Garden* by Cornelia Meigs with the same delight it had given her as a child. Dog-eared copies of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* are likewise reread with pleasure by adults, who enjoy the story itself and also nostalgic memories of happy childhood hours.

These examples help to answer the problems of expense and passing interest. After all, no child wants to be forever dressed in clothes too large for him nor given books too old for him. Children need a few choice

books for each age level, books which they covet more than a doll or a toy train. By the time the child who has worn out his copy of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* has grown up to *Rabbit Hill* or *The Moffats* or *Robin Hood* or *Treasure Island*, he will have learned to take care of his precious books as a young bibliophile should.

Variety is as important in a child's personal collection as it is in any library. One child may want lots of dog stories, another, fairy tales, and still another, more science than fiction. Such special enthusiasms should be respected within limits but not carried too far. Children do get into reading ruts sometimes. They think they know what they like, but of course they don't know one tenth of the books they might like if they encountered them. The task of the grown-up is to tempt them away from their too-narrow interests. If a child says he hates fairy tales, give him a tall tale—*Pecos Bill* or *Pippi Longstocking*. If he wants only horse stories, try him with a book like *Amigo*, *Circus Horse* by Page Cooper, a story with plenty of horses, but centered on three young people who are working for the day when they will perform in the big ring. If a little girl is reading too many fairy tales, give her Mary Norton's *The Borrowers* or one of William Pène Du Bois' stories which swing back and forth between fantasy and grim realism. Or, better still, try her with a realistic story so romantic and absorbing that the fairy tales will seem tame by comparison. In some such way as this, tactful and knowledgeable adults can broaden children's reading interests and keep them exploring books of many varieties.

## Public libraries and the child

Whether the child is at home or in school, books must be available for him to

handle and choose. One great source is, of course, the public library. Children should



*This handsome cock, boldly designed and colored,  
is typical of the fine use of folk art  
the artist makes in her illustrated books.*



learn, even in their pre-school days, that a library card is a passport to enjoyment and information. Long after a child is grown up and has left school and home book collections behind, the public library will be open to him. And if he has learned in childhood how to use its facilities, including the wonderful helpfulness of librarians, he has at hand an invaluable source of recreation and reference. The trained children's librarian, with her wide knowledge of books and her skill in giving unobtrusive guidance, is the best possible person to acquaint a child with library facilities. If a town is too small to have a public library, then grown-ups should find out what other service is available from state or county libraries. Sometimes one of these furnishes substantial loan collections to schools and to individual classrooms. Sometimes they send out well-supplied book-mobiles which permit children and adults to choose their own books for a two weeks' or

longer period. Sometimes they maintain a service by mail so that children in towns without libraries may send for the books they wish to read, paying only for the postage. In any case, children should learn early how to obtain free books from public library service of one kind or another. Our free libraries are one of the important privileges of our national life, and their collections of children's books are unexcelled by those in any other country.

## Books for a school library

Choosing children's books for a school library presents some special problems. In general, schools need substantial collections of reference books, well selected and up to date. Children should be taught to use these informational books from the primary grades on. Schools should find a typical cross section of the varied types of children's books available—factual books of all kinds, poetry, biography, historical fiction, fairy tales, and all the other types of fiction. The school librarian or the library committee should consider the particular town or neighborhood

in which the school is situated. If the children come largely from one particular European background they will enjoy books about their national group. But those same children will enjoy other stories as well. Children in a farming community will welcome stories about 4-H activities and farm animals, but they need books with an urban background, too. Whatever special subjects it may include, any good book collection will begin with a basic list of juvenile classics and other books that have stood the test of time and critical evaluation. How find these books?

## First aids to book selection

Indexes and book lists will be found in the bibliography to this chapter, but several are of such immediate importance that it seems essential to mention them here. For instance, it is hard to think of any kind of a book, old or new, for children of any age or special interest, that cannot be located with the help of the *Children's Catalog*. That big volume, with its yearly supplement, lists children's books alphabetically by title, author, and subject matter or kind. Books are well annotated, distinguished books are starred, and, last of all, there are book lists by grades. Schools will not always see eye to eye on this latter grouping, but it does indicate possibilities.

Next in importance to students of children's books, and first in charm, is the indispensable *Horn Book Magazine*. It is published six times a year and reviews current books for children and young people with copious illustrations reproduced from the books themselves. There are also delightful articles about and by famous illustrators and authors. The literary standards of the reviews and articles are high, the format is charming, and a special treat each year is that exciting summer issue which reports the acceptance speeches of the Newbery and Caldecott winners. Their pictures are included, and someone who knows the author or the artist writes intimately about him. Upper-grade children are as excited about this issue as their teachers, and certainly this magazine is one for every school's subscription list.

Another valuable reference which stems from *The Horn Book* is its *Newbery Medal Books*. This handsome volume contains the acceptance speech of every winner from 1922 to 1955, an excerpt from the book, and a brief biography of the author. Some of these papers are as delightful to read as the books themselves, for adults and children alike.

Another source of information is a list compiled by Louise Davis each year, summarizing the best books of the preceding year. It

is called *Recommended Children's Books of 19....* The books are grouped into four large divisions—For the Youngest, The Beginning Reader, Upper Elementary Grades, and Teen Age. Under each of these four parts there are the usual type or subject groupings. The books are well annotated, and grade placement is indicated. These annual bulletins will help you locate the best of the latest books, and so will the book sections of such newspapers as the *New York Times*, *New York Herald Tribune*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Christian Science Monitor*, and other large city newspapers. These offer regular book sections which review new children's books.

Entirely different is the small and comparatively permanent list published by the Press of Western Reserve University and called *Children's Books Too Good to Miss*. Here, under four age groups, are books of such distinction and worth that children should at least be exposed to them, even if they reject some of them. It is a minimum list of juvenile classics and other fine books of many kinds and is especially helpful in selecting books for a child to own or for launching a school library. Five specialists in the field of children's literature selected and annotated these choice books.

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As we evaluate these books, old or new, we shall keep the child's needs and interests in mind and try to determine to what extent books written for him have met or ignored these needs. The basic requirements—good design, competent writing, and attractive illustrations—are to be found in many books, books that help the child to grow and give him clearer insights. If grown-ups bear in mind the criteria discussed in this chapter and throughout the rest of the book, they should be better able to appraise the suitability of a book for a special child or a class of children, and so bring children and books happily together.



The flood of recent publications in children's books is so overpowering that it is important to remind ourselves that there are old books in children's literature as fresh and serviceable today as they were fifty years ago. There are also old books for children which have been discarded, and properly so. Age is no guarantee of a book's excellence, nor recency of its significance. Some of the discards we shall glance at briefly, only to know their kind and to be wary of their reappearance in modern dress—because that is what happens now and then. We have not arrived at our wealth of fine modern books for children without considerable trial and error, and the errors are difficult to eradicate. We need

Illustration by Louis Rhead for *Gulliver's Travels*  
by Jonathan Swift, Harper, 1913 (book 5¼ x 8½)

*Here is a good example of how to make a giant gigantic in a picture. The artist puts an army between his feet, draws the city knee-high, and shows mountains barely up to his waist. It's a giant's-eye view of Lilliputia.*

perspective in judging children's books. We need to look at the past with modern eyes and view the present with the accumulated

## Books begin

Before a child can read, his literature begins, as it began for the race, through listening to the songs and stories of his people. Mothers of yesterday chanted or sang to their babies. In simpler days, old women told homely tales of the beasts and kept alive legends of strange events. Grandmothers have always been the custodians of traditional tales, both of families and of the larger group, the tribe or the village. The men told stories to the adults of daring exploits and great adventures, and we may be sure the children listened. The professional storytellers, the bards or minstrels, took these tales, embroidered and polished them, and made them into the ballads or the hero tales or the epics of the people. So unwritten folk literature grew and was passed on by word of mouth for centuries before the collectors gathered it together for printing. Much of it was bloody and terrible; some of it was romantic, some coarse and humorous, told by adults to

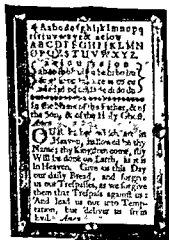
wisdom of the past. Where and how did children's literature begin? What has it grown out of and where is it going?

### For grown-ups: fables, romances, adventures

William Caxton (1422-1491) was England's first printer. He issued a series of books which are still appearing on our publishers' book lists for children. These included, among other titles, Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*, *The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye*, *The Boke of Histories of Jason*, *The Historie of Reynart the Foxe*, and *Aesop's Fables*. Tales of King Arthur still give the older child a fine introduction to romance, the *Odyssey* remains a popular adventure story, and the fables are enjoyed by young children even if they do skip the morals. Although Caxton intended his books for grown-ups, children took many of them for their own, and these same collections continue to delight each generation.

### For children: hornbooks and battledores

While textbooks for children will not be discussed in detail, no account of their books seems complete without a word about the hornbooks. These were not books at all but little wooden paddles on which were pasted lesson sheets. These sheets were covered over with transparent horn and bound along the



From a photograph in *A Little History of the Horn Book* by Beulah Falmesbee, The Horn Book, Inc., 1942

<sup>1</sup>Today children attend adult moving pictures, take over adult popular songs, and read the same comics that the grown-ups read.

## HISTORY OF

## Valentine and Orson.

Reader; you'll find this little Book contains  
Enough to answer thy Expence and Pains;  
And if with Caution you will read it thro'  
'Twill both Instruct thee and Delight thee too



PRINTED AND SOLD IN ALDERMAY CHURCH YARD  
BOW LANE, LONDON

### Pedlar's treasury: a tu'penny treat

Then came the chapmen, the pedlars of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with news sheets, ballads, broadsides, and chapbooks tucked in among their trinkets. Chapbooks were cheap little books that could be bought for as little as a penny and not over a sixpence. They ran from sixteen to thirty-two or sixty-four pages and were often not stitched but merely folded. Mr. E J. H. Darton, in *Children's Books in England*, tells us that surviving copies have been found all tenderly sewed with bits of silk or ribbon, perhaps by some child owner. The editors or compilers of these little books took the leg-ends of antiquity, the old tales of the Middle Ages, elements of the fairy tales—any stories they could lay their hands on—and retold them in drastically condensed versions. All literary charm was lost; the grammar was often faulty, but what remained was a height-

From a reproduction in *The Chapbooks of the Eighteenth Century*  
by John Ashton, Chatto and Windus, 1882

ened sense of action with an adventure on almost every page. The educated upper classes of England may have frowned upon them, but the common people of England loved them and bought them continuously. Of course the children discovered them and became ardent patrons of the pedlar's treasures, too. As between a tu'penny for a tart or a chapbook, the child probably chose the chapbook as often as the tart.

The stories were the kind that children have always liked—adventure stories with heroes who do things. The account of their doughty deeds fills a book: *Chapbooks of the Eighteenth Century*, by John Ashton. "The History of Valentine and Orson," for instance,

was the story of twin brothers who were separated in infancy, Orson to be raised by a bear and Valentine to be reared by a king of France. Later Valentine captured the wild Orson and they performed great deeds together, each winning the hand of a lovely princess. Incidentally, the bear child, Orson, is a forerunner of Mowgli in *The Jungle Books*.

One favorite, "Tom Hickathrift," was a kind of early English Paul Bunyan. "At ten years old he was six feet high and three in thickness, his hand was like a shoulder of mutton, and every other part proportionable." He pulled up trees, slew giants, and felled four highwaymen at a blow.

Another hero was the lusty "Sir Bevis of Southampton," who was cheated of his birthright and sold to the heathen Saracens. When he slew some sixty of the heathen for deriding the Christian religion, the king's daughter Josian won him her father's forgiveness and gave him a wonderful steed, Arundel, and a mighty sword, Morglay. With their aid he fought many brave battles, including the capture of the giant Ascapart, and finally—rather tardily it seems—came to marry the beautiful "Heatheness," Josian.

The attitude of serious-minded adults of the day toward these crude, often vulgar, little books was generally scornful. The clergy

## The Puritans and perdition

### In England

Even while the chapmen were peddling their lurid, light-hearted "Histories," a religious movement was getting under way that was to affect life on both sides of the Atlantic. Beginning about the middle of Queen Elizabeth's reign, the English had become "the people of a book, and that book was the Bible." In London people went daily, in great crowds, to St. Paul's to hear the Bible read aloud, and small Bibles found their way into homes everywhere.

A group of deeply religious people whom we know as the Puritans studied their Bibles with a fervor that was increased by their hon-

"viewed with alarm," but at least one man of letters spoke a good word for them. Richard Steele, in *The Tatler* (No. 95), tells how his young godson was "much turned in his studies" to these histories and adds:

He would tell you the mismanagements of John Hickerthrift, find fault with the passionate temper of Bevis of Southampton and loved St. George for being the champion of England. and by this means had his thoughts insensibly moulded into the notions of discretion, virtue, and honour.

This may be a charitable interpretation of the effects of chapbook reading, but Florence Barry, in *A Century of Children's Books*, adds a cheerful note also. She says:

John Bunyan was the first to reconcile the claims of religion and romance, and he could never have written *The Pilgrim's Progress* if he had not been a good customer of the pedlar in his youth. (pp. 6-7)

Badly written, crudely illustrated, unhonored though they were, the chapbooks preserved and popularized some of the precious elements of literature that children love. But their coarseness probably paved the way for the reaction against "tales, stories, jests," the reaction which produced children's books full of somber warnings and doleful examples.

est horror at the licentiousness and depravity of the Restoration period and their veneration for the victims of religious persecution. Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* (1563), with its details of death at the stake, was studied by the Puritans and given to their children.

As if this legacy of terror were not enough for small Puritans to endure, a clergyman, James Janeway, wrote in 1671 or 1672 a famous book that was long popular with the heavenbent adults who ruled over Puritan nurseries. Its full title was:

*A Token For Children: being an Exact Account of the Conversion, Holy and Exemplary Lives, and Joyful Deaths of several young Chil-*

dren To which is now added, Prayers and Graces, fitted for the use of little Children.

There were thirteen good little children in this gloomy book, and, considering their lives, it is small wonder that they died young. They spent their time trying to reform, convert, and generally improve everyone they encountered. They brooded on sin and eternal torment and the state of their souls. If these poor, priggish children had not died briskly of "a decline" or "the Plague," you would think that some of the "sinners" they wrestled with might have exterminated them in self-defense. Morbid and unnatural as this book was with its continual dwelling on death, it grew from the earnest desire of the Puritans to make children happy—not in our modern sense of the word but in theirs. To be happy meant to be secure in the avoidance of Hell and in the assurance of Heaven. Unfortunately their method of instilling religious ideas was chiefly through the use of fear—the fear of Hell. Little hope of achieving a sense of security from their literature!

### **Pilgrim's Progress**

Out of the Puritan world there emerged one great book for children—Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. This book was intended for adults and probably reached the children piecemeal as they listened to the grown-ups read it aloud, or discuss it, or tell the more dramatic portions of it. Reviewing its story, we find it easy to understand why the children took it over. It is told in the best tradition of the old fairy tales which John Bunyan had enjoyed in chapbook form when he was a boy.

John Bunyan (1628-1688), a humble tinker, confessed that one of the sins of his youth was his delight in the "History of the Life and Death of that Noble Knight Sir Bevis of Southampton." As he grew more and more religious, he put away all such frivolous reading and turned to the Bible and to such fear-inspiring books as John Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. These harrowing tales of "holy deaths" obsessed Bunyan to the point where

he saw visions and dreamed horrible dreams of his own sins and the torments he was to suffer because of them. He began to preach such fiery and fearsome sermons that he was locked up for nonconformity to the established Church of England. In jail for years with his Bible and his Martyrs, he began to write the story of a Christian soul on its troublesome pilgrimage through this world to everlasting life. Sir Bevis was not forgotten but was reborn as Christian; the giant Ascapart became the Giant Despair, and so, in good fairy-tale style, Christian fought with monsters and enemies under properly symbolic names. But no chapbook tale was ever so somber and so dramatic as this progress of a Christian pilgrim. It begins as a dream:

"As I went through the wild waste of this world, I came to a place where there was a den, and I lay down in it to sleep. While I slept, I had a dream, and lo! I saw a man whose clothes were in rags, and he stood with his face from his own house, with a book in his hand, and a great load on his back."

Part one takes Christian through adventures, dangers, and despair until he loses the burden of his sins and joyously enters the Holy City. Part two deals similarly with Christiana and their sons. It is less exciting but seems to reflect Bunyan's love for his wife and children.

In its original form, with long interludes of theological moralizing, children could never have read this book, but when the dramatic story is cleared of such obstructions it is a moving tale. Today the abbreviated but otherwise authentic edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*, shortened by Mary Godolphin and illustrated by Robert Lawson, is a book no child should miss. No Slough of Despond was ever so slimy as Mr. Lawson makes it; no Mr. Worldly Wise was ever so despicable, and no Christiana ever so sweet. John Bunyan may have written his book for adults, but the children have it now.

What Bunyan did write for children were some dull doggerels called *Divine Emblems, or Temporal Things Spiritualized*. The chil-

Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass or his . . .  
fall down by the way, and hide thyself from  
them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them  
up again.

### THE BURNING OF MR. JOHN ROGERS.



**MR. JOHN ROGERS**, minister of the gospel in London, was the first martyr in Queen Mary's reign; and was burnt at Smithfield, February the fourteenth, 1554. His wife, with nine small children, and one at her breast, followed him to the stake, with which sorrowful sight he was not in the least daunted, but with wonderful patience died courageously for the gospel of JESUS CHRIST.

From *The New England Primer, or An Easy and Pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading*, Massachusetts Sabbath School Society

dren would have none of them, and the only virtue we can find in them today is their absence of terror. These "good Godly books" of the Puritans must have developed in the children for whom they were intended either a lively resistance to books in general or a still livelier search for a comforting chapbook or some other treasure from the adult world.

### In the New World

The *Mayflower* reached our shores in 1620, but the great exodus of Puritans from England to the New World did not take place until around 1630. We can well imagine that those early years of colonization were too difficult for any excursions into book-producing either for children or adults, but the Puritans'

passion for education could not long be submerged. Whatever else may be said of them, the history of their activities in New England is alive with a deep and growing concern for schools and the tools of education, books. Hornbooks are referred to as early as 1632, brought from England with the crosses blotted out—crosses being for the time a religious symbol to which the Puritans objected.

The first book for children to be published in the New World appeared in 1646. It was written by John Cotton and its full title was:

*Milk for Babes, Drawn out of the Breasts of Both Testaments, Chiefly for the Spirituall Nourishment of Boston Babes in either England, but may be of like Use for any Children*

Beneath this title it adds *A Catechism in Verse*, and begins:

Who is the Maker of all things?  
The Almighty God who reigns on high.  
He form'd the earth, He spread the sky.

It continues with all the intricate details of Puritan theology.

Editions of the *New England Primer* as early as 1691 have been found, although it is known to have been in print before that. Its famous rhyming alphabet begins:

In Adam's fall  
We sinned all.  
Thy life to mend  
God's Book attend.

In addition to this, the book contained prayers, poems, the shorter catechism, the Ten Commandments, Bible verses, and pictures. One of these is a quaint woodcut of a Dame's school; another is the picture of a mournful figure contemplating a tombstone, and the prize is a graphic illustration of the burning of Mr. John Rogers, with his wife and ten children looking on, while a jaunty man-at-arms holds them at bay. With tombs and torture, it is a little difficult to justify the subtitle, "An Easy and Pleasant Guide to the Art of Reading."

As late as 1832, Boston had its own descendant of Janeway's *Token*. It was written



by Perkins and Marvin and the title page reads as follows:

Mary Lothrop  
Who Died In  
Boston  
1831

The authors add in their preface that their Memoir was prepared "for the purpose of adding another to the bright pictures set before children to allure them into the paths of piety." This was a fairly large book for those days, about three by seven inches, and fully three fourths of it is devoted to the pious

## "Cheerfulness creeps in"

### Fairy tales in France

Paul Hazard in his delightful *Books, Children and Men* calls attention to the early portraits of children clad in long velvet skirts, heavily plumed hats, corsets, swords, and ornaments, and he remarks, "If, for centuries, grown-ups did not even think of giving children appropriate clothes, how would it ever have occurred to them to provide children with suitable books?"

Yet around 1697 this miracle occurred in France with the publication of *Histoires ou contes du temps passé avec des moralités* (Histories and Tales of Long Ago with Morals), or, more familiarly, *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* (Tales of Mother Goose) (p. 235). The stories were "La belle au bois dormant" (The Sleeping Beauty); "La petite chaperon rouge" (Little Red Riding Hood); "La Barbe Bleue" (Blue Beard); "Le maître chat, ou le chat botté" (The Master Cat, or Puss in Boots); "Les fées" (Diamonds and Toads); "Cendrillon, ou la petite pantoufle de verre" (Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper); "Riquet à la houe" (Riquet with the Tuft); and "Le petit poucet" (Little Thumb).

Did Charles Perrault, member of the French Academy and author of many serious but forgotten works, collect these traditional tales, or was it Pierre Perrault d'Armancour, his eldest son? No author is listed in what

Mary's interminable death. The charming little frontispiece shows Mary and her little brother kneeling beside a chair, praying. The boy has struck his sister, and Mary is praying him into a state of repentance. Shortly after that, Mary becomes ill and begins her preparations for death. Gloom descends for the remaining pages. It is to be hoped that Boston children who were given this "bright picture" had recourse to the lusty nonsense of *Mother Goose*. For, despite the Puritans, a pirated edition of this cheerful volume was printed in the New World in 1785.

is probably the first edition. Opinion favored the father for years, but he never admitted authorship. On the other hand, a publication privilege was granted to the eighteen-year-old "P. Darmancour." Percy Muir gives other evidence that the son was the compiler and adds, "To-day informed opinion in France also favours the son and we may very well leave it at that." (*English Children's Books, 1600-1900*, p. 49) Petrault's Fairy Tales, we call them, and their immortality is due as much to the spontaneity and charm of the style as to the traditional content.

Perrault had imitators but no rivals. Mme. D'Aulnoy (p. 307) turned the old folk-tale themes into ornate novels for the court. "The Yellow Dwarf" and "Graciosa and Percinet" are sometimes adapted for modern collections but are rarely seen in their original form. Mme. de Beaumont (p. 307), busy with the education of children, also took time to write some fairy tales for them. Of these, her "Beauty and the Beast" has survived deservedly. Still others took a hand at the fairy tales, but none with the freshness of Perrault.

### John Newbery in England

Meanwhile, in England, it was a happy day for children, steering a perilous course between the Pedlar and the Puritan, when in 1729 R. Samber translated Perrault's *Tales of*

*Mother Goose*. No chapbook was ever so thrilling as these eight tales, no "good Godly book" was ever so beloved. At the time, they must have attracted the attention of an English publisher by the name of John Newbery, because not only did he later use the title *Mother Goose*, but he may also have discovered through the popularity of the tales the importance of the child as a potential consumer of books.

John Newbery was what we would call today "a character." He dabbled in many things. He wrote; he published; he befriended indigent authors; he did a flourishing business manufacturing and dispensing medicines and a "Medicinal Dictionary." The caustic Samuel Johnson called him "Jack the Whirler," only to be pressed into service by busy Mr. Newbery as an occasional writer and literary adviser to a rapidly expanding publishing house. Then in 1744, along with Dr. James' Fever Powders, Newbery offered for sale his latest publication:

A LITTLE PRETTY  
POCKET-BOOK  
Intended for the  
Instruction and Amusement  
of  
Little Master Tommy,  
and  
Pretty Miss Polly.  
With Two Letters from  
Jack the Giant-Killer;  
As also  
A Ball and a Pincushion;  
The Use of which will infallibly make Tommy  
a good Boy and Polly a good Girl.  
To which is added,  
A Little Song-Book,  
Being  
A New Attempt to teach Children  
the Use of the English Alphabet,  
by Way of Diversion.<sup>1</sup>  
For the "amusement" of Tommy and Polly,

<sup>1</sup>No copies of the first English edition (1744) have survived. But in 1944, the two-hundredth anniversary of its first appearance, Mr. F. G. Melcher issued a reproduction of the first American edition, which was a reprint by Isaiah Thomas published in 1787 in Worcester, Mass. You can now examine the *Pocket Book* gaily bedecked with a flowery gilt paper cover after Newbery's custom.

"by way of diversion"—a new approach to children and the beginning of English books for their delight! Of course, Jack the Giant-Killer wrote two exceedingly moral letters; he had evidently reformed and settled down since the chapbook days, for his lectures are as mild as milk, with no threats anywhere. The letters are followed by a series of games with rhymed directions and morals: marbles shuttle-cock, blindman's buff, thread the needle, leap frog, and many other old favorites. There are fables, proverbs, and rules of behavior, with a rhyming alphabet and a few poems thrown in for good measure. The morals to the fables are made more romantic and palatable by the signature of Jack the Giant-Killer. The success of the *Pocket-Book* evidently encouraged the publisher because other books for children followed rapidly, and among them two famous ones.

Between 1760 and 1765 Newbery issued *Mother Goose's Melody or Sonnets for the Cradle*.<sup>2</sup> In 1765 *The History of Little Goody Two Shoes* appeared. This was a small juvenile novel, the first of its kind to be written expressly for children. Oliver Goldsmith is supposed to have compiled the *Mother Goose* and written *Goody Two Shoes*.

*Goody Two Shoes* is the story of a virtuous and clever child, Margery Meanwell. At the opening of the book, Margery's father suffers "the wicked persecutions of Sir Timothy Gripe and Farmer Graspall," who manage to ruin him and turn the whole family out of house and lands. The parents quickly die (evidently no Dr. James' Fever Powders available), leaving Margery and her brother Tommy destitute. Tommy goes to sea and Margery is rescued by charitable Clergyman Smith and his wife. When they buy her two shoes, the child is so overcome with pleasure that she keeps crying out, "Two shoes, Madam, see my two shoes"—hence her name.

This happiness is short-lived, for Gripe forces Smith to turn her out of the house. Back to the hedgerows once more, Margery teaches herself to read with remarkable ease

<sup>2</sup>See Chapter 4 for detailed discussion of *Mother Goose*

by studying the schoolbooks of more fortunate children. Soon she knows more than any of them and decides to advance their learning. She makes up an alphabet of wooden blocks or "rattle traps" with both small and large letters, puts them into a basket, and goes from house to house helping children to read. The methods of the Trotting Tutoress apparently work like a charm, for all her young pupils respond immediately with never a "retarded reader" in the whole countryside. They also learn such "Lessons for the Conduct of Life" as: "He that will thrive, must rise at five"; "Honey catches more flies than vinegar"; "Fair words butter no parsnips."

Such pedagogical talent is bound to carry Mrs. Margery far, and soon she is made the head of a flourishing school. She meets the admirable Sir Charles Jones, whose love is won by "her virtue, good sense and prudent behaviour." As she is standing at the altar with this titled gentleman, who should come dashing in but Tommy, richly dressed—just in time to give his sister a handsome marriage settlement. After that, the Lady Margery lives happily and dies respected and beloved by all. "Her life was the greatest blessing and her death the greatest calamity that ever was felt in the neighborhood."<sup>1</sup>

*Goody Two Shoes* is full of sociological lessons; its characters are types rather than individuals, and its sly humor is often more adult than childlike. Nevertheless, it was entertaining and it was a child's book. Many adults, notably Charles Lamb, recalled the pleasure it gave them when they read it as children.

John Newbery and his successors in the firm published other juveniles, but today we remember chiefly *Goody Two Shoes* and the immortal *Mother Goose's Melody*. This first English publisher of books for children is honored annually when the Newbery Medal is presented for the year's most distinguished literature for children. Frederic G. Melcher, a publisher, in 1922 created and named this

<sup>1</sup>*The Renowned History of Little Goody Two Shoes Otherwise Called Mrs. Margery Two Shoes* Attributed to Oliver Goldsmith. Edited by Charles Welsh.



Illustration by N. C. Wyeth for *Robinson Crusoe* by Daniel Defoe, McKay, 1920 (original in color, book 6¼ x 8¾)

*N. C. Wyeth's dramatic power is evident in this picture. Children like Wyeth's pictures for their heroic quality, rich color, and their convincing interpretations. See also page 300.*

award as a tribute to the genius and foresight of the Englishman who first believed in children as discriminating patrons of books.<sup>2</sup>

### Adventure at last

One book emerged from the Puritan world to mark not only the progress of cheerfulness but the beginning of contemporary adventure tales. It was *Robinson Crusoe*, one of the most popular books in all English literature. It was written by Daniel Defoe, a gloomy reformer and pamphleteer who was in trouble most of his life.

Defoe (1659-1731), with a wisdom far in advance of his times, wrote on banks, insurance companies, schools for women, asylums for idiots, and all sorts of social prob-

<sup>2</sup>For the list of books which have been awarded the Newbery Medal see page 668.

lems. He turned out bitter political and religious satires which landed him in the pillory. He rose to wealth and fame and sank to penury and prison more than once. Writing was his passion, and few men have written more continuously. His most famous book, *The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*, appeared in 1719, when Defoe was sixty and nearing the end of his turbulent career. We are told four editions of it were printed in four months, and for once the old fighter enjoyed fame with no unhappy repercussions of any kind.

Why has this book commended itself to children of each succeeding generation? It was addressed to adults and originally contained masses of moral ruminations that the children must have skipped with their usual agility in the avoidance of boredom. Today children's editions generally omit these tiresome reflections and get on with the story.

There was, of course, an Alexander Selkirk, marooned for over four years on the island of Juan Fernandez, who not only told his story to Defoe but also gave him his papers. However, it is due to the skill of Defoe that Selkirk, as Robinson Crusoe, emerges a favorite world hero. The theme itself is irresistible: man pitted against nature, one man with a whole world to create and control. He must obtain food, provide himself with clothes and shelter, fight off wild animals, reckon time, keep himself civilized and sane. We are given many details of how he makes his shelter and cultivates a garden, how he domesticates his little herd of goats and acquires a parrot, and finally how he discovers the savage who becomes "my man Friday," a symbol today of faithfulness and loyalty.

Here is a book that satisfies the child's hunger to achieve. Identifying himself with Robinson Crusoe, he wins an ordered, controlled place in the world by his own efforts and foresight. With the coming of Friday, he has the love of a friend whom he in turn nurtures and protects. No wonder children read and reread and dramatize this book. All the details are there; every question is answered.

It is reasonable and clear—a design for living, complete and satisfying.

### A satirical travel fantasy

Another remarkable book emerged from this period, a political satire not intended for children but appropriated by them and known today as *Gulliver's Travels*. The author, Jonathan Swift (1667-1745), was born in Dublin and died there, Dean of the Cathedral. But between his birth and death, he spent considerable time in London and took an active part in the political life of the times. Recognized today as one of the greatest satirists in English literature, in his own day he was known as a pamphleteer and misanthrope. Despite this forbidding reputation, he had deep and lasting friendships with such famous men as Sir William Temple, Bolingbroke, and Oxford. With his two close friends, the distinguished physician John Arbuthnot and the poet Alexander Pope, he founded the Scriblerus Club. From this group came the *Memoirs* of a fictional character known as Martinus Scriblerus. Dr. Arbuthnot wrote about Martinus' childhood and Swift was supposed to carry the hero through some fantastic journeys, but he never did so. However, this book may have furnished Swift with the idea for Lemuel Gulliver.

Swift wrote his book in Ireland to lampoon the follies of the English court, its parties, its politics, and its statesmen. Worried about the reception of the book, he published it anonymously in 1726 as *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, in four parts, by Lemuel Gulliver. To Swift's surprise and relief, London society, the very society he was making fun of, was highly diverted. In writing these preposterous tall tales, Swift seems to have been caught up with the richness of his own invention, and the humorous story often gets the better of satire with entertaining results.

Children have always loved things in miniature, and they soon discovered the land of the Lilliputians. No one ever forgets Gulliver's waking to find six-inch people walking over

him and Lilliputian ropes binding him. All the fascinating details are worked out to scale with logic and precision. Children are untroubled by any double meanings and like the fantasy for itself. The second journey, to the land of giants, Brobdingnag, is the next most popular, but man in an inferior position, treated like a toy, is not so appealing as the omnipotent Gulliver in Lilliput. The remaining books most children never read. Laputa is the land of the superminds, and a thoroughly repulsive lot they are. The country of the Houyhnhnms is strangest of all. It is ruled by beautiful and benignant horses, whereas men, the Yahoos, are horrid creatures, the beasts of the noble horses. As far as children are concerned, the first adventure makes the book, and it is Lilliput forever!

If Gulliver's travels had not fascinated artists, the book might not have survived in children's reading as long as it has. An early edition illustrated by Charles E. Brock (1894) and later editions illustrated by Arthur Rackham and by Fritz Eichenberg would lure anyone into reading it.

### Poets and children

At about the time *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels* were published, a gentle non-conformist preacher wrote a book of poetry for children. Isaac Watts (p. 129) moralized in verse about busy bees and quarrelsome dogs, but he also wrote tender and beautiful hymns, many of which are found today in most hymnals. His *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* (1715) dwelt not on the fearful judgments of God, but on God "our refuge," and many a child must have

been comforted by his tender "Cradle Hymn."

Toward the end of the century a major poet, William Blake (p. 162), published a book of poems for and about children. *Songs of Innocence* (1789) is now considered an epoch-making book, although it caused no stir at the time of its publication. A companion volume, *Songs of Experience* (1794), followed. These books may well mark the beginning of the Romantic Movement in English poetry. Although most of Blake's unique lyrics are for adults, the melody of his verses appeals to children, and the sound of authentic poetry is good for young ears.

Ann and Jane Taylor's *Original Poems for Infant Minds: By Several Young Persons* (1804) goes back to teaching lessons in the manner of Watts' *Moral Songs*, but with a difference. The vigorous, fun-loving Taylors (p. 130) tell a good story in their verses and reveal something of the simple, pleasant life of rural England. The book enjoyed immediate popularity, was translated into various languages, and is best known today for the familiar "Twinkle, twinkle, little star."

*Butterfly's Ball*, published in book form in 1807, was written by William Roscoe (1753-1831), a lawyer and member of Parliament, for the amusement of his little son. There is no story, but the rhythm is gay and dashing, and there is no moralizing. There are such fascinating details as a mushroom table with a water dock leaf tablecloth, and there are William Mulready's amusing pictures of dressy insects with human faces. However, the personifications seem labored, and the long popularity of this poem must have been partly due to the lack of better verse for children.

### Didacticism again

#### Rousseau, the apostle of freedom

In 1762 Rousseau proclaimed his theory of a new day for children through his book *Emile*. He believed in the joyous unfolding of a child's powers through a free, happy life.

The fact that Rousseau's own life was sin-cursed and unhappy did not prevent his followers from accepting seriously this new glorification of freedom. The child *Emile* was the companion of his tutor, free of all books except *Robinson Crusoe*, living vigor-

ously out of doors and learning from experiences and activities. Schools today reflect Rousseau's emphasis on experiences and activities but they have wisely retained both books and discipline.

### Didacticism in France and England

In its day, *Émile* effected a revolutionary change in people's attitudes toward both children and education. Rousseau seemed to some like a breeze blowing away the clouds of Puritan morbidity. It was some time before his followers could see through the naïveté of his assumption that, given complete freedom, a child will develop both nobility and happiness. This was perhaps wishful thinking on Rousseau's part. At any rate, one would naturally expect the ardent Rousseau converts, if they wrote any books for children at all, to write only the gayest ones. Instead, in France, England, and even the United States, they began to write painfully didactic stories, sometimes to teach religion, sometimes to inform and educate. The only thing these writers seemed to have carried over from Rousseau was the idea of following the child's natural interests and developing these. But in practice, they went at the business hammer and tongs. In these deadly books of theirs, if a poor child picked strawberries, the experience was turned into an arithmetic lesson. If he rolled a snowball, he learned about levers and proceeded from those to wedges. If he took a walk, he had to observe every bird, beast, stone, and occupation of man. Day and night these ardent authors stalked their children, allowing never a moment for play or fancy but instructing and improving on every page. No longer did they threaten the child with the fear of Hell, but the pressure of Information hung almost as heavily over his hapless head.

Here was a revival of didacticism with a vengeance—not the terrifying theological didacticism of the Puritans but the intellectual and moralistic variety. Students who wish to read more about this period should study the works of the French Mme. de Genlis

(1746-1830) and Armand Berquin (1749-1791) and those of such English writers as Laetitia Barbauld (1743-1825), Sarah Trimmer (1741-1810), and Hannah More (1745-1833). For most readers, a few examples of this writing will probably suffice.

One of the classic examples of the new didacticism is *The History of Sandford and Merton* in four volumes by Thomas Day (1748-1789). Tommy Merton was the spoiled, helpless, ignorant son of a rich gentleman, whereas Harry Sandford was the sturdy, industrious, competent child of an honest farmer. Harry was reared out of doors and trained to work and study; there was nothing he did not know and nothing he could not do. Father Merton, handicapped by wealth though he was, saw at once the advantage of having his young darling unspoiled and trained in the ways of the honest Harry. So poor Tommy, little knowing what was in store for him, was put in the charge of the same clerical tutor who had wrought such wonders with Harry. Mr. Barlow trained both boys, but Harry was always used as the perfect example to show up the ignorance, incompetence, and general orneriness of poor Tommy. All day that worthy pair, the omniscient Barlow and the admirable Harry, instructed, disciplined, and uplifted poor pampered Tommy. Why Tommy never had enough initiative to use one of his educational levers or wedges to haul off and clout his tormentors is beyond imagination; but no, through volume after volume, he was plagued and polished into Rousseau-like simplicity and competence. It took four volumes to do it, but there he was at last—Tommy Merton remodeled, divested of all his fine apparel, his curls gone, and his life to be given over to study and philosophy forever more. Could any reform go further?

Another and perhaps the most gifted exponent of didacticism in children's books is Maria Edgeworth (1767-1849), who told her moral tales with such dramatic realism that they are still remembered. She had an excellent laboratory for developing her stories as she was the second of twenty-two children.

She not only helped her father with the education of the younger ones but wrote her stories in their midst, tried them out with the children, and modified them according to their suggestions. Thomas Day himself had a hand in Maria's early education, but her own father seems to have been a greater influence in her writings than anyone else.

Maria Edgeworth wrote many stories, some deadly dull and unnatural. But at her best, she was a born storyteller. She developed real plots—the first in children's stories since the fairy tales—with well-sustained suspense and surprise endings that took some of the sting out of the inevitable morals. The story that is most frequently quoted and that remained in the anthologies the longest is probably "The Purple Jar," which is sufficiently typical to relate here.

Rosamond, an amiable but thoughtless little girl, was out shopping with her mother. At the sight of all the delightful things displayed in the windows, Rosamond wanted something from each one, but a large purple vase in an apothecary's shop completely charmed her. She felt she could not do without it, although a large hole in her only pair of shoes made it evident that she needed shoes more than purple vases. Her mother, knowing well the fallacy of the jar, gave the guileless child her choice—shoes or jar. Rosamond chose the jar and received it in ecstasy. Once the treasure was in the house, Rosamond was sure she had made the right choice, but her mother bided her time. Wishing to put flowers in the vase, Rosamond emptied the purple liquid and lo, she had only a common white glass jar! In tears she begged her mother to take it back and purchase her shoes instead, but Mother insisted that Rosamond must abide by her choice, and so she did, limping miserably for a whole month. At the end of this sad tale Rosamond remarked:

*How I wish I had chosen the shoes! They would have been of so much more use to me than the jar: however, I am sure, no, not quite sure, but I hope I shall be wiser the next time.*

This proves that Rosamond, at least, was a real human being, even if her stern mother was not.

The mother annoys us today because she is insincere and unnatural. Rosamond, on the other hand, except for her language, is all child. The picture of the little girl, standing in the shoe shop in profound meditation over the choice of jar or shoes, is very childlike and genuine. Maria Edgeworth tells an interesting story. But her tales carry such a heavy and obvious burden of moral lessons that her characterizations and excellent plots are sacrificed to didacticism.

### *Didacticism in the United States*

It was inevitable that the United States should develop its own brand of didacticism. Samuel G. Goodrich (1793-1860), who wrote under the name of Peter Parley and turned out five or six volumes a year, wrote laudatory biographies of famous men and poured out a continuous stream of information in the fields of science, history, and geography. Jacob Abbott (1803-1879) launched a travel series in which a hapless youth by the name of Rollo was dragged from one city and country to another, bearing up nobly under a steady barrage of travel talks and moralizing. Both of these gentlemen wrote well but pedantically. We shall detect some of their literary descendants in the books of today—information attractively sugared but oppressively informative nevertheless.

Our chief moralist was Martha Farquharson, pseudonym for Martha Finley (1828-1909), whose *Elsie Dinsmore* series began in 1868 and ran to twenty-six volumes. This pious heroine had a way of bursting into tears or fainting with such effect that adult sinners were converted and even Elsie's worldly father was brought to a state of repentance. Little girls cried their way through all twenty-six volumes. Most parents developed considerable resistance to Elsie but were baffled by her powers to charm their offspring. Elsie was a spellbinder, for her author had a sense of the dramatic. To this day sensible women

remember weeping over Elsie's Sabbath sit-down strike at the piano, when she refused to play secular music for her erring father. She was made to sit on the piano stool until one of her best faints put an end to her martyrdom

## Modern books begin

Even while Peter Parley was dispensing information, and Maria Edgeworth was teaching little Rosamond valuable lessons, and Elsie Dinsmore was piously swooning, epoch-making books in both England and the United States were appearing that were to modify the whole approach to children's reading. These children's classics, as popular today as when they were first published, not only brought laughter, fantasy, and realism into stories for young people, but they began the trend toward better illustrations in children's books. Each of these books will be discussed in greater detail in later chapters; they are reviewed here because they are landmarks in the development of children's literature.

### Fairy tales: the Grimms and Andersen

*Grimm's Popular Stories* (p. 237) was translated into English by Edgar Taylor in 1823. Children called them Grimm's Fairy Tales, and they became as much a part of the literature of English-speaking children as their own *Mother Goose*. They were the stories the Grimm brothers gathered from the lips of the old storytellers. They represented the accumulated wisdom of the race, and they were grave, occasionally droll, but often somber and harrowing.

The *Fairy Tales* (p. 307) of Hans Christian Andersen appeared in England in 1846, translated by Mary Howitt. Many of these stories were his own adaptations of folk tales which he, too, had heard from the storytellers. But to these he added his own fanciful inventions and immeasurably enriched the child's world of the imagination. Andersen's stories have unusual literary and spiritual values but they are, for the most part, in a minor key, melancholy and even tragic.

and Father repented. Elsie was a prig with glamour, and there is no telling how many more of her kind might have developed if certain pioneers had not appeared to clear away the didacticism in children's books.

### Laughter at last

One of the first notes of gaiety was a long story-poem by Clement Moore called "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (1822), known to children ever since as "The Night Before Christmas" (p. 96). This fast-moving, humorous ballad, full of fun, fancy, and excitement, with never a threat or a dire warning to spoil the children's delight, is as beloved now as it was in Moore's day.

Under Queen Victoria, England's industrial age flourished and grew prosperous and pompous. Adult society was never stiffer, children's books never more improving. Then suddenly two eminent men, by way of relaxation or reaction perhaps, broke into gibbering nonsense that sent the children off into gales of laughter. One of these gentlemen was an artist who earned his living by making scientific paintings of birds and reptiles. His name was Edward Lear (p. 105). When he grew too bored with the drawing room, he used to take refuge with children. For them he would write absurd limericks which he would illustrate on the spot. His *Book of Nonsense* (1846) not only was an unprecedented collection of amusing verses and pictures but perhaps paved the way for another still funnier excursion into absurdity.

In 1865 a book appeared that is generally considered the first English masterpiece written for children. It was *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The author was an Oxford don, a lecturer in logic and mathematics, who used the pen name Lewis Carroll (p. 110). *Alice* still remains a unique combination of fantasy and nonsense that is as logical as an equation. It was first told, and later written, solely for the entertainment of children, and neither it nor its sequel, *Through the Looking Glass*,



has the faintest trace of a moral or a scrap of useful information or one improving lesson—only cheerful lunacy, daft and delightful. *Alice* launched the literature of nonsense and fantasy which is so gravely and reasonably related that it seems as real as rain, as natural as going to sleep.

### Illustrations keep pace

Both these laughter-provoking books have delightful illustrations—Lear's own outrageous caricatures for his *Book of Nonsense* and Sir John Tenniel's inimitable drawings for Carroll's *Alice*. Then came Walter Crane, Randolph Caldecott, and Kate Greenaway.<sup>1</sup> Their charming water colors brightened the pages of children's books with decorative designs and appealing landscapes and figures which hold their own with the best in the modern books.

It is small wonder that when Frederic G. Melcher sponsored a second award—this time for the most distinguished picture book for children published each year in the United States, beginning in 1938—he named it the Caldecott Medal after the English artist. The award is a fitting memorial to the man who drew a picture of himself surrounded by children, and who left those children a legacy of gay storytelling pictures.<sup>2</sup>

### Myths: Hawthorne and Kingsley

In the United States Greek myths were introduced to children by a gifted novelist, Nathaniel Hawthorne. Around 1852 *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys* was published, followed in 1853 by *Tanglewood Tales for Girls and Boys*. These books contained stories of the Greek gods and heroes, supposedly related to a group of lively New England children by a young college student, Eustace Bright. Eustace talked down to the children; his gods lost much of their grandeur, and his heroes were often child-sized. But the stories

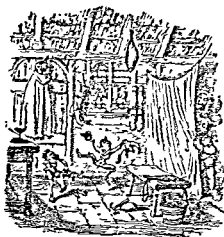


Illustration by George Cruikshank for *Grimm's Popular Stories* (book 4½ x 6½)

*Cruikshank had a feeling for action, humor, and lively details, a caricaturist's eye for the grotesque, and an artist's sense of composition.*

had a delightful style, and the chatty interludes of banter between Eustace and the children provided delightful pictures of the New England outdoor world.

In England, Charles Kingsley, country parson, Victorian scholar and poet, also retold the myths for children. His adaptations are not only closer to the original myths than Hawthorne's but convey the inner significance and grandeur of the myths as no other translation for young people has ever done. Here are dreams of greatness upon which youth should be fed, presented with the sensitive perception of a poet. Oddly enough, in Kings-

<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 2 for a fuller account of illustrators of children's books.

<sup>2</sup>For a list of the books which have been awarded the Caldecott Medal see page 668.

ley's own day this book was less popular than his original fantasy, *The Water-Babies* (1863), which is marred for us today by its moralizing.

#### Realism with characters in place of types

In the United States our epoch-making book was a modest story of family life, *Little Women*. The author, Louisa M. Alcott, submitted the manuscript hesitatingly, and her publisher had to tell her as gently as possible how unacceptable it was. Fortunately, he felt some qualms about his judgment and allowed the children of his family to read the manuscript. They convinced him that he was wrong. Those astute little girls loved the book, and little girls have never ceased reading it since its publication in 1868. The story is as genuine a bit of realism as we have ever had. Family life is there—from the kitchen to the sanctuary of the attic, from reading to giving amateur dramatics in which the home-made scenery collapses. But right as all the details are, the reason grown-ups remember the book is the masterly characterizations of

the four girls. No longer are people typed to represent Ignorance or Virtue, but here are flesh-and-blood girls, as different from each other as they could well be, full of human folly and human courage, never self-righteous, sometimes filled with irritation but never failing in warm affection for each other. This ability to make her characters vividly alive was Louisa M. Alcott's gift to modern realism for children.

#### Realism crosses the tracks

So far, on both sides of the Atlantic, realistic stories for children dealt idealistically with eminently respectable characters. When Samuel Clemens, or Mark Twain as he signed himself, wrote *Tom Sawyer* in 1876, he carried realism across the tracks. In this book Huck and his disreputable father were probably the child's first literary encounters with real people who were not considered respectable but who were likable anyway. Moreover, they were not typed to show the folly of being disreputable, but Huckleberry Finn won all hearts and so nearly stole the book from Tom that he had to appear in a book of his own. Mark Twain, in these two unsurpassed juveniles, not only gave us realism with humor but also showed warm tolerance—for the first time in children's books—in his presentation



Illustration by Norman Rockwell for *Tom Sawyer* by Mark Twain, Heritage, 1936 (original in color, book 6¼ x 9¼, picture 5 x 6½)

*The art of Norman Rockwell may be photographic in its realism, but its fidelity to American people and its rich humor make it generally beloved. His Tom Sawyer, with its perfection of composition and droll details, masterfully portrays Mark Twain's delightful young character.*

From Randolph Caldecott's  
*Hey Diddle Diddle Picture Book*,  
 Warne (book 8½ x 7¼)

When Caldecott's people and animals are not  
 in violent action, they still seem about  
 to speak or to move. Children enjoy not only  
 the action but the meaningful details.

See also page 101.



"Pray, Miss Mousey, are you within?"

*Heigho, says Rowley!*

"Oh, yes, kind Sirs, I'm sitting to spin."

of socially undesirable people. We still find  
 too few examples of this in children's books.

#### Children's literature comes into its own

The Victorian period saw the stream of cheer-  
 fulness in children's books rise steadily, and  
 many of the books of this period are still  
 popular. It is interesting to glance at the chro-  
 nology of these landmarks in children's litera-  
 ture:

- 1846 *Fairy Tales*, by Hans Christian Ander-  
 sen (first English translation)
- 1846 *Book of Nonsense*, by Edward Lear
- 1865 *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*,  
 by Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge  
 Dodgson)
- 1865 *Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates*, by  
 Mary Mapes Dodge
- 1868 *Little Women*, by Louisa M. Alcott
- 1872 *Sing-Song*, by Christina Rossetti
- 1876 *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, by  
 Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)
- 1879 *Under the Window*, by Kate Greenaway
- 1880 *The Peterkin Papers*, by Lucretia Hale
- 1883 *Treasure Island*, by Robert Louis  
 Stevenson
- 1883 *Nights with Uncle Remus*, by Joel  
 Chandler Harris

- 1883 *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*,  
 by Howard Pyle
- 1884 *Heidi*, by Johanna Spyri (first English  
 translation)
- 1885 *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*,  
 by Mark Twain
- 1885 *A Child's Garden of Verses*, by Robert  
 Louis Stevenson
- 1888 *Otto of the Silver Hand*, by Howard  
 Pyle
- 1894 *The Jungle Book*, by Rudyard Kipling
- 1900 *Little Black Sambo*, by Helen Banner-  
 man
- 1902 *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, by Beatrix  
 Potter
- 1904 *The Wind in the Willows*, by Kenneth  
 Grahame

These are the books that marked new  
 trends in children's literature. They not only  
 carry us into the twentieth century with dis-  
 tinction, but their influence is discernible in  
 the writing of this century. Laura Richards  
 continued the deft nonsense verses of Lear  
 and Carroll in her *Tirra Lirra* (1932). A. A.  
 Milne's skillful light verse, *When We Were  
 Very Young* (1924), did as much to popular-  
 ize poetry for young children in schools and  
 homes as Robert Louis Stevenson had done  
 earlier. And the small, sweet lyrics of Chris-



Illustration by E. H. Shepard for *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame, Scribner, 1954 (book 5¼ x 7¼, picture 1¼ x 1¾)

Whether Ernest Shepard is drawing Christopher Robin going "hoppity" or Toad going motoring, he can suggest, with a few strokes of the pen, a particular mood, action, or personality. Here Toad's huge mouth, wide stance, pompous pose, and absurd costume tell the tale—Toad the playboy!

tina Rossetti were followed by the exquisite poetry of Walter de la Mare (1922).

In the field of fairy tales and fantasy, *East o' the Sun* continued the interest in folklore that began with the Grimms. But with the Uncle Remus collections there came a new consciousness of the United States as a depository of regional and racial folklore. *Paul Bunyan* (1941) and other tall-tale heroes, and *The Jack Tales* (1943), southern variants of European folk tales, stemmed from this interest. If the Italian fairy tale, *Pinocchio* (1927), was the gay descendant of Andersen's somber toy stories, so too was the younger and equally light-hearted *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926). Gulliver's Lilliput was never so fascinating as the miniature world of *The Borrowers* (1952). *Charlotte's Web* (1952) continued the great tradition of animal fantasy begun in *The Wind in the Willows*. And the daft world of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* grew perceptibly zanier in the fantastic dreams of Dr. Seuss.

True Americana began with *Tom Sawyer*, but it is flourishing in a different form in the *Little House in the Big Woods* (1932) series. It is there, too, in the great animal story *Smoky* (1926), written in the vernacular of a cowboy. And it is certainly alive in such regional stories as *Strawberry Girl* (1945).

The picture-stories so charmingly begun by Beatrix Potter continue in the varied books of Wanda Gág, Marjorie Flack, and many others. And if stories of other lands began auspiciously with *Hans Brinker* and *Heidi*, they have grown and strengthened in *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* (1932), *The Good Master* (1935), and *The Ark* (1953).

So types of books that were turning points in children's literature at an earlier period are perpetuated today, although the kinship between the old and the new may seem remote. Happily, innovators continue to arise in the twentieth century. For instance, with Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind* (1921), so strong an interest in biographical and informational writing for children was launched that it has developed into a major trend. And so important is this trend in our day that it is perhaps the unique contribution of the twentieth century to children's books.

Looking back at the slow development of a literature for children, we discover a certain rise and fall in emphasis that seems to repeat itself. In this brief historical survey only a few titles have been cited under each type, but enough, perhaps, to give some feeling for the general trends that we may expect to find recurring in our own century. In order to profit by the mistakes of the past we must constantly evaluate the old as well as the new in the light of today's fuller knowledge of child nature. Then we will be able to bring the best of both old and new books to our children.

**Sing it again**



**Mother Goose**

**Ballads and story-poems**

**Verses in the gay tradition**

**Poetry of the child's world**

**Singing words**

**Using poetry with children**

**Verse choirs**

**ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS**

Mother Goose rhymes, popular ballads, and complete poems by Dorothy Aldis, William Allingham, Herbert Asquith, Mary Austin, Dorothy Walter Baruch, Harry Behn, Stephen Vincent and Rosemary Carr Benét, William Blake, Lewis Carroll, Elizabeth Coatsworth, Hilda Conkling, Walter de la Mare, Ivy O. Eastwick, Marion Edey and Dorothy Grider, Eleanor Farjeon, Eugene Field, Rachel Field, Rose Fyleman, Kate Greenaway, Langston Hughes, Victor Hugo, Edward Lear, David McCord, Mildred Plew Meigs, A. A. Milne, Ewart Milne, William Brighty Rands, Laura E. Richards, Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Christina Rossetti, Carl Sandburg, Lew Sarett, Sir Walter Scott, William Shakespeare, William Jay Smith, Robert Louis Stevenson, Ann and Jane Taylor, Sara Teasdale, James S. Tippet, Tynnes, Isaac Watts, Winifred Welles, Annette Wynne



#### HEAR WHAT MA'AM GOOSE SAYS!

Mr dear little Blossoms, there are now in this world, and always will be, a great many grannies besides myself, both in petticoats and pantalons, some a deal younger to be sure, but all monstrous wise, and of my own family name. These old women, who never had chick nor child of their own, but who always knew how to bring up other people's children, will tell you with very long faces, that my enchanting, quieting, soothing volume, my all-sufficient anodyne for crows, peevish, won't-be-comforted little hairs, ought to be laid aside for more learned books, such as they could select and publish. Fudge! I tell you that all their batterings can't deface my beauties nor their wise pratings equal my wiser prattlings, and all imitators of my refreshing songs might as well write a new Billy Shakespeare as another Mother Goose—we two great poets were born together, and we shall go out of the world together.

No, no, my Melodies will never die,  
While nurses sing, or babies cry.

From *The Only True Mother Goose Melodies*, an exact and full-size reproduction of the original edition published and copyrighted in Boston in the year 1833 by Munroe and Francis (Lothrop, Lee and Shepard, 1905)

One of the opening pages of an old edition of *Mother Goose* (shown in the reproduction at left) contains a picture of an ancient crone admonishing two small children. The picture is followed by the text of her lecture. Mark its words well, for this is Ma'am Goose herself, addressing her "dear little blossoms." As you read, you discover that the good dame is distinctly irritated. She is relieving her mind in no uncertain terms concerning those misguided reformers who are forever pestering mothers to discard her soothing ditties in favor of more educational and uplifting verses. After defending her jingles lustily, the good dame rends her long-faced critics with a particularly withering blast:

Fudge! I tell you that all their batterings can't deface my beauties, nor their wise pratings equal my wiser prattlings; and all imitators of my refreshing songs might as well write a new Billy Shakespeare as another Mother Goose—we two great poets were born together, and we shall go out of the world together.

No, no, my Melodies will never die,  
While nurses sing, or babies cry.<sup>1</sup>

The idea of Mother Goose calmly associating herself with Shakespeare and asserting an immortality equal to his is not so far-fetched as it may seem. Moreover, this spirited defense of a book that long ago proved itself a nursery classic is as timely today as it was in 1833. For earnest pedagogues are always arising to protest that Mother Goose is out of date, that her vocabulary is all wrong for the children of today, that her subjects are not

<sup>1</sup>*The Only True Mother Goose Melodies* Reprinted by Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Co. (Boston, 1905) from the Munroe and Francis edition (Boston, 1833).

sufficiently "here and now." Despite these protests, the children go right on crying for her ditties, and mothers and nurses know well her power to soothe "won't-be-comforted little bairns." Publishers know this, too. Year after year, new and beautiful editions of *Mother Goose* appear to catch the eyes of parents and warm the hearts of the bairns.

## Who was Mother Goose?

Where did these verses come from? Who was Mother Goose? These are questions that occur to us as we turn over the pages of one of these attractive editions. The answers are sometimes confusing; it is sometimes difficult to distinguish legends from facts, but it is illuminating to discover how these nursery songs are linked with our historical and literary past.

### Dame Goose of Boston

Boston children think they know quite well who Mother Goose was. In the Old Granary Burying Ground in the heart of downtown Boston, the caretaker will show you a flock of little tombstones bearing the name of Goose. He points to one particular stone and assures you that this is the resting place of none other than the famous Dame Goose herself. Many a Boston child, gazing with awe at this small tombstone, has visualized the beak-nosed old woman, with a suggestion of wings in her sharp shoulder blades, ready to go up in glory, chanting:

Old Mother Goose, when  
She wanted to wander,  
Would ride through the air  
On a very fine gander.

It is always a shock to Boston children when they grow up to be told that Mother Goose is not the author of these verses but only a name for a collection of folk rhymes—that is, anonymous verses handed on by word of mouth for a long time before they achieved the permanency of print. Moreover, the rhymes, they are told, came from England, and the name from France. What then of their old friend, Dame Goose, resting peacefully in Boston's Old Granary Burying Ground? As we shall see, she is just a happy

legend, but such a persistent one that she commands the attention of each generation of students.

### Ma Mere l'Oye

The name *Mother Goose*, as Chapter 3 explains, was first associated not with verses but with the eight folk tales recorded by Perrault (p. 43). Andrew Lang, in *Perrault's Popular Tales*, tells us that the frontispiece of *Histoires ou contes du temps passé, avec des moralités* (Histories and Tales of Long Ago, with Morals), showed an old woman spinning and telling stories, and that a placard on the same page bore the words: "Contes de ma Mère l'Oye" (Tales of Mother Goose). But the name *Mother Goose* has now become so completely associated with the popular verses that most English translations of the Perrault tales omit it from the title of the stories.

The French also connect *Mother Goose* with Goose-footed Bertha, wife of Robert II of France. French legends represent the queen spinning and telling stories to children, as illustrators have sometimes pictured *Mother Goose*.

### Dame Goose in England

Lina Eckenstein, in *Comparative Studies in Nursery Rhymes*, says that the name *Mother Goose* was first used in England in connection with Robert Powell's puppet shows, exhibited in London between 1709 and 1711. His plays, which he wrote himself, included among others *Robin Hood and Little John*, *The Children in the Wood*, *Whittington and His Cat*, and one called *Mother Goose*. Perhaps it was Powell who popularized the name in England, for Joseph Addison in one of the *Spectator Papers* says that when Powell set up his puppet show in London opposite St.

Paul's and the sexton rang his bell, many church-goers were deflected from piety to puppets. St. Paul's became so deserted that the sexton wrote to Addison to complain, "As things are now, Mr. Powell has a full Congregation, while we have a very thin House." What did Mr. Powell play under the

title of *Mother Goose*? It may have been one of Perrault's stories heard from a sailor. At any rate, Perrault's *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye* was translated into English in 1729, and the popularity of the eight tales undoubtedly helped establish still more firmly that delightful nonsense name, *Mother Goose*.

## Early editions of Mother Goose

### John Newbery edition, 1760-1765

The next mention of the name in England is in connection with John Newbery, who is discussed in Chapter 3. He brought out the collection of nursery rhymes called *Mother Goose's Melody or Sonnets for the Cradle* (p. 44). No copy of this first edition still exists. Mothers who see their children wear their favorite *Mother Goose* to shreds can well understand why the book vanished. However, we do know that being a Newbery book, it was "strongly bound and gilt," unlike the chapbooks which were merely "folded, not stitched" in pamphlet style. Leigh Hunt refers to these Newbery books as "certain little penny books, radiant with gold, and rich with bad pictures." So *Mother Goose* evidently made her English debut glitteringly adorned.

### Isaiah Thomas edition, 1785

The first authentic American edition was undoubtedly a pirated reprint of the John Newbery edition. It was issued by Isaiah Thomas, a publisher of Worcester, Massachusetts, who was in the habit of reproducing the Newbery books. W. H. Whitmore vouched for the fact that two copies of the Isaiah Thomas edition existed in his day, and in 1889 he reproduced the book in full, calling it *The Original Mother Goose's Melody*.<sup>1</sup> So this Whitmore book may very well be a reproduction of the

earlier Newbery edition of *Mother Goose*, "rich with bad pictures" and lacking only the "gilt."

The W. H. Whitmore reproduction is a little book, two and one-half by three and three-fourths inches. The facsimile opens with an amusing Preface in which the compiler refers to himself as "a very great Writer of very little Books" (probably Oliver Goldsmith), and more seriously to British nursemaids as the possible originators of these "nonsense verses." The woodcuts are tiny and often somewhat blurred, but there is one for each of the fifty-two rhymes. It is something of a shock to find the old rhymes disguised with strange titles and followed by morals or maxims. For instance, "Plato's Song" turns out to be "Ding, dong, bell" and is followed by the maxim, "He that injures one threatens an hundred." "I won't be my father's Jack" bears the astonishing title, "Amphion's Song of Eurydice," and is succeeded by the mock-solemn editorial note: "Those arts are the most valuable which are of the greatest use." The most amusing comment is the one that follows "Margery Daw," and will surely be applauded by all bewildered followers of footnotes: "It is a mean and scandalous Practice in Authors to put Notes to Things that deserve no Notice."

At the end of the fifty-two rhymes with their strange commentaries, there is another surprise: Part II contains sixteen songs of Shakespeare. "Where the Bee Sucks," "Hark! Hark! the Lark," and "Under the Greenwood Tree" are offered to children along with the nursery rhymes. This pleasant juxtaposition of the two authors makes good Dame Goose's

<sup>1</sup>W. H. Whitmore, ed. *The Original Mother Goose's Melody* (Joel Munsell's Sons: Albany, 1889). It is reproduced in facsimile from the Isaiah Thomas edition (Worcester, Massachusetts, 1785). Mr. Whitmore's introduction gives many interesting facts about the early collections of *Mother Goose*.



Mother GOOSE's Melody. 25



PLATO's SONG.

DING dong Bell,  
The Cat is in the Well,  
Who put her in?  
Little Johnny Green,  
What a naughty Boy was that,  
To drown Poor Pussy Cat,  
Who never did any Harm,  
And kill'd the Mice in his Father's  
Barn.

Maxim. He that injures one throat,  
cuts an Hundred.

LITTLE

26 Mother GOOSE's Melody.



LITTLE Tom Tucker  
Sings for his Supper;  
What shall he eat?  
White Bread and Butter;  
How will he cut it,  
Without e'er a Knife?  
How will he be married,  
Without e'er a Wife?

To be married without a wife is a terrible  
Thing, and to be married with a bad Wife is  
something worse; however, a good Wife that  
does well is the best medical instrument in the  
World.

SE

Mother GOOSE's Melody. 27



SEe, Margery Dear,  
Jacky shall have a new Master;  
Jacky must have but a Penny a Day,  
Because he can work no faster.

It is a mean and scandalous Practice in Am-  
erica to put Notes to Things that deserve no  
Notice.

Great.

GREAT

28 Mother GOOSE's Melody.



GREAT A, little B,  
Bouncing B;  
The Cat's in the Cupboard,  
And she can't see.

Yes she can for that you are empty, and  
don't mind your Book.

SE

Supposedly from The Original  
Mother Goose's Melodies,  
as first issued by John Newbery,  
of London, about 1760. Repro-  
duced in facsimile from the  
edition as reprinted by Isaiah  
Thomas of Worcester,  
Mass., about 1785 (Joel Munsell's  
Sons, 1889)

boast, "We two poets were born together, and  
we shall go out of the world together."

Thomas Fleet legendary edition, 1719

The Dame Goose that Boston children hear  
about is supposed to have been the author of  
a *Mother Goose* said to have appeared in Bos-  
ton in 1719, some forty-five years before John  
Newbery and Oliver Goldsmith produced  
their "sonnets for the cradle." Although refer-  
ences to the "legendary" 1719 edition of  
*Mother Goose* continue to appear in serious

studies of *Mother Goose* editions, most schol-  
ars doubt that the book ever existed. The  
legend has been kept alive perhaps because  
the people supposedly responsible for this  
edition played an important and lively part  
in Boston's early history, perhaps because  
Americans have wished to believe in the book,  
or perhaps just because the legend is a good  
tale.

Thomas Fleet, an Englishman, did come to  
Boston in 1712 and set up his print shop in  
Pudding Lane (now Devonshire Street).

ancestor. On the whole a healthy skepticism is the safest approach to any attempts to identify nursery rhyme characters with real people.

### Comparative Studies in Nursery Rhymes

Lina Eckenstein in her book, *Comparative Studies in Nursery Rhymes* (1906), discusses a few historical origins, but is mainly concerned with the ancient folk origins of the verses and their counterparts in other countries. For example, she traces "Sally Waters" from its present simple game-form back to its origin as part of a marriage rite in pre-Christian days. The name, she thinks, came from the Roman occupation of the city of Bath, where the temple was dedicated to Sulis-Minerva, Sul being the presiding deity at Bath. Sul of the Waters and Sally Waters do sound as if they might be related.

She devotes a whole chapter to cumulative tales—two of which have become a part of *Mother Goose*, "The house that Jack built" and "The old woman and her pig." She relates them to the Hebrew chant that begins:

A kid, a kid, my father bought  
For two pieces of money,  
A kid, a kid.  
Then came the cat and ate the kid  
That my father bought  
For two pieces of money.  
A kid, a kid.

The chant continues with the familiar sequence of dog, staff, fire, water, ox, butcher,

### Qualities that charm the children

#### Variety

There is little doubt that the children enjoy the variety of subject matter and mood that continually surprises them in these verses. It ranges from the sheer nonsense of

Hey! diddle, diddle,  
The cat and the fiddle,  
The cow jumped over the moon.

then the angel of death, and the Holy One. This sequence, symbolizing the Hebrew people and their enemies at the time of the Crusades, is still recited as a part of the Passover liturgy and is probably older than "The old woman and her pig." Miss Eckenstein thinks that the latter is not merely what one scholar has called "a broken-down adaptation of the Hebrew poem" but that all these cumulative stories were originally incantations or rituals seriously performed. The speakers were invoking a sequence of powers for the sake of breaking a spell that had fallen on some object man wanted for his own use—a pig, a house, a Johnny cake—and on everything around the object, which must also be freed from the spell.

Miss Eckenstein also finds abbreviations of some of the ballads in *Mother Goose*. For instance, "Tam Lin" of romance becomes "Tommy Linn" of the nursery rhyme and sometimes is even named as the villain of "Ding, dong, bell."

Who put her in?  
Little Tommy Linn.

She believes there are evidences of bird sacrifices in the numerous references to robins and wrens in the nursery rhymes, particularly "The Wren Shooting" or "Robbin, Bobbin, Richard, and John." So Miss Eckenstein goes back into primitive folk customs for the origins of many of these old rhymes, and discovers verifications for her theories in similar customs and folk rhymes of many countries throughout Europe.

to the sad and tender ballad of "The babes in the wood":

My dear, do you know  
How a long time ago  
Two poor little children,  
Whose names I don't know . . .

It is a rewarding task to make a list of the different kinds of verses in *Mother Goose*. Here are some obvious categories with only

one or two examples in each, to which you can add dozens of other examples:

*People* (a rich gallery of characters)  
Children—Little Miss Muffet  
Grown-ups—Old King Cole  
Imaginary—Old Mother Goose when she wanted to wander  
Grotesque—There was a crooked man  
*Children's pranks*—Georgie, Porgie, pudding and pie  
*Animals*—I had a little pony  
*Birds and fowl*—Jenny Wren; Higgledy, pig-gledy, my black hen  
*Finger play*—Pat-a-cake  
*Games*—Ring a ring o' roses  
*Riddles*—Little Nancy Etticoat  
*Counting rhymes*—One, two, Buckle my shoe  
*Counting out*—Intery, mintery, cutery-corn  
*Alphabets*—A, is an apple pie  
*Proverbs*—Early to bed, and early to rise  
*Superstitions*—See a pin and pick it up  
*Time verses*—Thirty days hath September  
*Days of the week*—Solomon Grundy, Born on Monday  
*Verse stories*—The Queen of Hearts, She made some tarts  
*Dialogue*—Who killed Cock Robin?  
*Songs*—A frog he would a-wooing go  
*Street cries*—Hot-cross Buns!  
*Weather*—Rain, rain, go away  
*Tongue twisters*—Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers  
*Accumulative stories*—This is the house that Jack built  
*Nonsense*—Three wise men of Gotham

There is one little nature personification in Mother Goose:

Daffy-Down-Dilly has come up to town,  
In a yellow petticoat, and a green gown.

and there is the charming

The North Wind doth blow,  
And we shall have snow,  
And what will poor Robin do then?

But on the whole, descriptive nature poems, in the modern sense, are conspicuously lack-

ing. So are fairy poems; the only mention of fairies is usually

Oh who is so merry  
So merry heigh-ho,  
As a light-hearted fairy?  
Heigh-ho, heigh-ho.

Even this one fairy rhyme is lacking in many editions, but the collections abound with characters absurd, grotesque, and impossible who belong in the category of imaginary creatures if not of fairies.

Look respectfully, then, at the kind and the content of the verses in *Mother Goose*. Every little jangle presents some fresh idea so bold and dashing that the child can hardly wait to hear the next one. Call these verses doggerel, if you will, but in what other collection can you find such variety and surprise?

### Musical quality

Lured on by the variety of these rollicking jingles, the child is also captivated by the sound of them. "Sing it again," he insists, when you finish reading one of his favorites. He nods his head or rocks his body or waggles a finger, marking time to the rhythm. He himself often suits the words to his own action. A two-year-old, crawling laboriously upstairs, chanted as he came: "Upstairs" (one fat leg heaved up the step) "and downstairs" (the other leg hauled up). This he said over and over until he reached the top. Then he walked into a bedroom chanting triumphantly, "An' in my lady's chamber, and dis' my lady's chamber." Shades of all the vocabulary studies! From what picture or from what adult did he learn the meaning of *chamber*?

A three-year-old was bouncing up and down on a spring-horse, chanting her own version of "Ride a cock horse." If you read her chant aloud, you discover that while she mixed up the words, she never lost her rhythm, which is indeed perfection for galloping:

Wide a cock horse, wh'ever she goes, wh'ever she goes,  
wh'ever she goes, wh'ever she goes, wh'ever she goes.  
Wide a cock horse, old lady wh'ever

she goes, *wh'ever* she goes, *wh'ever* she goes.  
*Wide* a cock horse to *Bambury Cross*. *See 'n* old  
lady on a white horse. *Wings* on her fingers.  
*Bells* on her toes. *Ever* she make *moosic*. *Ever*  
she make *moosic*. *Ever* she make *moosic*.  
*Wh'ever* she goes!

Now this child and countless others soon discover that the verses of Mother Goose skip, gallop, run, walk, swing, trot, and hop just as music does. "Hippity hop to the barber shop" is as good as any music—a high skip that swings along with gay vigor. Children often say it when they skip, and teachers sometimes have a group say it while others skip. It is fun to follow this idea and let the children march to "The Grand Old Duke of York," walk laggingly to the slow "A diller, a dollar," run hard to "Tom, Tom, the piper's son," run on tiptoe to "Wee Willie Winkie," tramp to "Hark, hark, the dogs do bark," rock or swing to "I saw a ship a-sailing," and so explore the musical aspect of these rollicking old verses. Because they are predominantly musical, they won't be injured by this kind of experiment.

Saying these verses, the child gets a happy introduction to rhyme—perfect and imperfect—to alliteration, onomatopoeia, and other sound patterns. Happily he gets these without the burden of their labels and so enjoys them light-heartedly. He likes the exact, near rhyming of

Georgie Porgie, pudding and pie,  
Kissed the girls and made them cry.  
When the boys came out to play  
Georgie Porgie ran away.

but he is not disturbed by the far from perfect rhyme of

Goosey, goosey, gander  
Whither shall I wander?  
Up stairs, down stairs,  
And in my lady's chamber.

Alliteration tickles his sound sense to a degree that astonishes us. A three-year-old hearing "Sing a song of sixpence" for the first time laughed so hard over the alliteration

that she would not allow the reading to proceed any further. All day long she went around hissing to herself, "S-s-sing a s-s-song of s-s-sixpence," and then chuckling. Another child was fascinated by the staccato *gledy* in "higgledy, piggledy, my black hen" followed by the equally explosive *tle*, "She lays eggs for gentlemen." Indeed, the brisk tune of this ditty turns upon its lively use of consonants, the *n* sounds making it ring delightfully. The small boy whose ears were tickled by its vigor recited it loudly, nodding his head with each minor explosion. Such spontaneous recitations and physical responses train the child to more vigorous speech, even as his ears are trained to enjoy the various sound combinations that make these *Mother Goose* verses such a splendid introduction to English poetry. For one of the many values of these melodious jingles is that they accustom the ear and the tongue to the musical aspects of our English language. The refrains are good examples:

A farmer went trotting  
Upon his grey mare,  
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!  
With his daughter behind him  
So rosy and fair,  
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

Not only does the refrain carry the jiggity, joggory pace of an old farm horse, but as the story becomes tragic and the mischievous raven laughs with horrid glee, the refrain takes on the vocal color of the mood and so helps to emphasize the story. In "A frog he would a-wooing go," again the refrain heightens the mood whether debonaire or melancholy. It is fun to recite and the children invariably join in the vigorous:

With a rowley, powley, gammon and spinach,  
Heigho, says Anthony Rowley!

They also like the lilting

How many days has my baby to play?  
Saturday, Sunday, Monday,  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday,  
Saturday, Sunday, Monday.

From Arthur Rackham's *Mother Goose*, Century, 1913 (original in color, book 7 x 9)

*Arthur Rackham's grotesquerie is an important part of his humor. Study this picture and you'll begin to see Rackham trees everywhere.*

*Rackham is one of the most versatile and imaginative of artists.*

*The pictures on pages 78, 84, and 241 reveal examples of the romantic, farcical, and dramatic.*



"THE MAN IN THE SILVER SHOE"

Perhaps the most elaborate use of a refrain in *Mother Goose* is:

I had four brothers over the sea,  
Perrie, Merrie, Dixie, Dominie.  
And they each sent a present unto me,  
Petrum, Partrum, Paradise, Temporie,  
Pertie, Mertie, Dixie, Dominie.

The words are as melodious as a tune. These refrains, so characteristic of folk literature, give the child a lead into the ballads, old and new, and are good speech play besides.

There are also in *Mother Goose* small lyrics of genuine poetic charm with a more subtle music than the examples already given: "I saw a ship a-sailing," "Bobby Shaftoe," "Hush-a-bye, baby," "Johnny shall have a

new bonnet," "Lavender's blue," "The north wind doth blow," and the charming

I had a little nut tree, nothing would it bear  
But a silver apple and a golden pear;  
The King of Spain's daughter came to see me,  
And all for the sake of my little nut tree.  
I skipped over water, I danced over sea,  
And all the birds in the air couldn't catch me.

All in all, the verses offer many opportunities for the development of a fine sense of musical quality.

#### Action

Still another quality of these verses that endears them to young children is their action. Jack and Jill fall down, Miss Muffet runs

away, Mother Goose rides on her gander, the cow jumps over the moon, Polly puts the kettle on, the cat comes fiddling out of the barn, the Man in the Moon comes down too soon. Here are no meditations, no brooding introspections, no subtle descriptions to baffle the jumping, hopping, up-and-doing young child. In these verses things happen as rapidly and riotously as he would like to see them happening every day.

### Story interest

Some of this action rises to the heights of a simple story. "The Queen of Hearts" is a slight but complete account of the innocent and industrious queen, her tarts stolen, the villain caught, punishment administered, and the villain left in a properly penitent frame of mind. The very rapidity of the action, the movement and swing of the rhythm enhance the excitement and make these story-rhymes particularly pleasing to young children. A child lends his pony to a lady and indignantly protests:

She whipped him, she lashed him,  
She rode him through the mire,  
I would not lend my pony now,  
For all the lady's hire.

Old Mother Hubbard and her bare cupboard involve considerable suspense before the tale is told out. Froggy has all sorts of difficulties with his wooing. The bewildered old woman who wakes to find her skirts cut short and so is not sure of her own identity makes a story that is funny to the last line. "The babes in the wood" is a tragic tale but endurable because it is brief and is gently and sweetly told. The brevity of these verse-stories makes them acceptable to children as young as two years old and prepares the way for longer and more involved prose stories.

### Humor

The sheer fun of *Mother Goose* keeps her verses alive in the hearts of every generation of children. Of course adults and children seldom see eye to eye on what is humorous.

Our jaded ears, for instance, may have forgotten that the hissing *s*'s of "s-s-sing a s-s-song of s-s-sixpence" sound funny, but the child laughs at them as he laughs at other comical sounds our dull ears miss. The child, on the other hand, may stare gravely at the story of the dish running away with the spoon, which usually strikes adults as funny. Then he turns around and giggles at the crooked man, who seems a little sad to us. So it goes, but the fact remains that on almost every page of *Mother Goose* there is a smile or a chuckle for the child. What does he laugh at? It is hard to say; we can only watch and listen. Sometimes he laughs at the sound; often he laughs at the grotesque or the incongruous. Surprise tickles him, absurd antics amuse him, and broad horseplay delights him. There are plenty of examples of all these in *Mother Goose*. A man jumps into the bramble bush to scratch his eyes "in again"; a pig flies up in the air; Simple Simon goes fishing in his mother's pail; Humpty Dumpty has a fall (falls always bring a laugh); Peter, Peter pumpkin-eater keeps his wife in a pumpkin shell; Tom who "was beat" runs "roaring down the street." Such humor is far from subtle, but its absurdities must be a relief to the small child beset on all sides by earnest adults.

### Illustrations

Finally, and almost above all, the child loves the prodigal array of pictures that bedeck his favorite book. Whether the edition is so small he can tuck it into the pocket of his playsuit, or so enormous that he has to spread it out on the floor, the numerous pictures enchant him. Here he shares his delight in *Mother Goose* with some of the finest illustrators of each generation, for artists also love the fun and action of these old rhymes and have lavished on them some of their best work. It has been said that the perfect edition of *Mother Goose* has not yet been made. Probably it never will be, because no two of us will ever see these famous characters in quite the same way. Just as there is endless variety in the content, the mood, and the characters of these

jingles, so there is a like variety in the size, the shape, the color, and the kind of pictures that illustrate them. One adult prefers one edition, while a second adult greatly prefers another, but the children apparently like them all. An attempt was made to set up some objective tests that would reveal the preferences of two groups of nursery-school

children exposed to many editions of *Mother Goose*. As a result, one or two editions were weeded out; but, for the rest, the children seemed to prefer whatever book was at hand. They chose them all with enthusiasm and no discrimination. All they asked was *Mother Goose* with colored pictures, simple or elaborate, commonplace or subtle.

## Popular modern editions

The modern editions of *Mother Goose*, with their rich colors and varied interpretations of the verses, are a never-ceasing delight. It is impractical to list them all, but the following editions, compiled from a poll of mothers, teachers, and children, are popular for several reasons. To classify them as fanciful or humorous or serious is somewhat misleading because most of these artists have pictures that fall under each of these categories. The only excuse for such classifications is to call attention to an outstanding characteristic of an edition and to suggest a possible contrast in mood if you wish to buy more than one.

### Realistic illustrations

One of the best editions for the child's introduction to *Mother Goose* and her world is the tried and true *The Real Mother Goose*, illustrated by Blanche Fisher Wright. There are colored pictures on every page; often one picture fills a whole page, or sometimes there are two or three small ones. In either case, the illustrations are clear and simple and have only a few effective details. The characters are dressed in charming period costumes and can be seen distinctly by a large group of children. The colors are clear washes,

sometimes soft and pale but more often bright and lively. It is a big book with a wide selection of traditional verses which the illustrations really illustrate. Having pictures that really illustrate is more important for young children than some artists have realized, because little children use pictures as clues to the meaning of the text. *The Real Mother Goose* is an all-around satisfactory edition for young children to start with, and it is continuously popular with nursery schools, kindergartens, and homes. The publishers have also issued a small replica of the big book, with only about a third of the rhymes and with the large pictures minus page margins. It is inexpensive and is useful



From Blanche Fisher Wright's *The Real Mother Goose*, Rand McNally, 1944 (original in color, book 9 x 11½)

Simple lines, clear colors, and no distracting details are characteristic of Blanche Fisher Wright's illustrations for *The Real Mother Goose*. Any three-year-old would understand this interpretation of "Black Sheep."



From Leslie Brooke's *Ring o' Roses*,  
Warne (original in color, book 7 3/4 x 10)

*A hungry wayfarer, a complacent cook, and  
the gluttonous feather lend humorous contrast  
to this study in pigs. See also page 115.*

Mr. and Mrs. Opie have assembled *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book*, with eight hundred of the ditties that have delighted children for generations. This vast collection is skillfully organized. It begins with the simplest ditties and progresses to more mature riddles, songs, and ballads. There is a picture for almost every verse, small, black and white, but amazingly effective. Many are taken from the old chapbooks and toy books. Thomas and John Bewick are well represented, and Joan Hassall's distinguished drawings are in keeping with their style. So truly illustrative are these pictures that children will probably enjoy them as much as do the adults who appreciate their quaintness. For students of early children's books this is an invaluable edition, and parents will also enjoy the book and its preface.

#### Humorous Illustrations

One edition of *Mother Goose* that no child should miss is *Ring o' Roses*, illustrated by Leslie Brooke. Here is an imaginative and broadly humorous interpretation of the traditional verses. The lovely English countryside is done in soft, pastel colors, with yellows and tender greens giving a springtime brightness to the pages. The characters are in English period costumes and are utterly satisfying interpretations. Simple Simon is Simple Simon, daft and delightful. Goosey, Goosey Gander and the outrageous old man "who wouldn't say his prayers" will be forever your vision of that remarkable pair. But above all you will remember Leslie Brooke's pigs and after chuckling over them you will never again see pigs as just plain pigs. Instead you'll see pigs with a smirk or a leer, pigs looking coy or shocked, pigs on the

for the children's own bookshelves, but the big book, now thirty years old, is indispensable.

Marguerite de Angeli's *Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes* contains 376 jingles, 260 enchanting pictures, and innumerable decorations. It is a big book, well bound and printed. For the artist, it must have been a labor of love. For the beholder, every fresh look is rewarding. Children and animals dance and prance across the pages. Little flowery bouquets and birds adorn the corners, and plump, pretty babies tumble here and there. The artist tells us that the family of "God bless the master of this house" bear the laughing faces of her own family, and many of the other pictures seem to be sketches of real people. The book is too big for small children to handle alone, but it is fine for grown-ups to look at with them. There is no organization of the verses, so there is often a transition from a nursery jingle to a ballad of sufficient substance to suit the oldest children. However, the rich offering of verses and illustrations makes this an edition to cherish and to pass on to the next generation.

From the rich store of their scholarly study



rampage, or pigs of complacency. This is, after all, the test of great illustrations: they do more than illustrate—they interpret the text so vividly that they become the visual embodiment of the words. There are only some twenty rhymes in *Ring o' Roses*, but every child should have it to pore over and absorb until the pictures are his forever. Whether it is a *Mother Goose* rhyme or a folk tale, Leslie Brooke's illustrations illumine and add unforgettable humor to the text.

*The Tall Book of Mother Goose*, illustrated by Feodor Rojankovsky, is an elongated book, approximately five by twelve inches, which can be easily held and handled by adults or children. The deep pages lend themselves either to delightful double-page spreads like the panoramic landscape of "One misty, moisty morning," or to a sequence of small pictures like those for "The three little kittens." Mr. Rojankovsky is a master of color and realistic texture. His furry kittens, feathery chicks, or woolly mufflers have a depth that almost creates a tactual sensation. His children are husky, everyday youngsters, never beautiful and often very funny. His pop-eyed Miss Muffet, viewing the spider with alarm, always brings laughter. On the other hand, Humpty Dumpty with the face of Hitler is a pity, since Hitlers are only passing phenomena and Humpty is immortal. Fortunately, young children never notice it. The illustration of "Ding, dong, bell" is a more serious mistake and misses the point entirely so far as the children are concerned. The freckled, rosy, good boy and the wan child with a cigarette not only do not illustrate the rhyme but introduce an adult line of thought completely irrelevant to the verse. Despite these two objectionable pictures, this book, with its 150 rhymes and twice as many pictures, remains justifiably popular. And be sure to see Mr. Rojankovsky's pictures for *Frog Went a-Courtin'*, a Caldecott winner, edited by John Langstaff. Frog is a swashbuckling hero, and Miss Mousie is a coy, decorous girl. Bright with the springtime colors of meadow and bog and



#### Little Miss Muffet

Sat on a tuffet,  
Eating of curds and whey;  
There came a big spider,  
And sat down beside her,  
And frightened Miss Muffet away.

"

From Feodor Rojankovsky's *The Tall Book of Mother Goose*, Harper, 1942 (original in color, book 4 1/4 x 11 3/4)

*This homely, everyday Miss Muffet is centered completely and intensely on the emotional problem of what to do about spiders. Rojankovsky's pictures usually illustrate, sometimes with exaggeration, often with humor.*



Little Miss Muffet sat on a tuft  
Eating some curd, and whey  
Along came a spider and sat down beside her  
And frightened Miss Muffet away

From Tasha Tudor's *Mother Goose*, Oxford, 1944 (original in color, book 6½ x 7½)

Here is a serene Miss Muffet, quaintly costumed. It is difficult to find the lurking spider, and we suspect he will leave Miss Muffet barely ruffled. This is the same pretty world we find in *Kate Greenaway*.

bouncing with action and fun, the book contains some of the favorite verses and the most familiar tune. It is a book to be read, sung, and looked at with delight.

#### Decorative, imaginative illustrations

*Mother Goose; or, The Old Nursery Rhymes*, illustrated by Kate Greenaway, is a tiny book to fit small hands and pockets and to fill small hearts with delight. It contains about 50 of the brief rhymes, each with its own picture in the quaint Kate Greenaway style. The print is exceedingly fine, but for non-readers this does not matter. The illustrations are gently gay, the colors are soft, and the people exquisitely decorative. Pictures, decorations, and format are all beautiful. This small volume is a treasure of fine bookmaking (p. 60).

*Mother Goose; The Old Nursery Rhymes*, illustrated by Arthur Rackham, one of England's great artists, is a splendid edition, now out of print, but well worth looking at in any library that has it. It is a thick book, with both "The house that Jack built" and "The old woman and her pig." The illustrations are of three types: pen-and-ink sketches, silhouettes, and full-page color. The silhouettes are amazingly effective; for example, the drip-

ping bedraggled cat of "Ding, dong, bell." The color plates are Rackham at his best and in many moods. "The old man in the wilderness" (p. 65) has trees with weird faces and long arms that are typical of Rackham's grotesque style. Here are the poetic mother and child of "Bye Baby Bunting," with rabbits in the background slyly stalking Daddy while a squirrel and an elf look on with amusement. "St. Ives" is scary; "Miss Muffet" jumps at a spider bigger than she is (as she undoubtedly believed him to be); and fairy folk lurk beneath the roadstools. These are pictures by an artist with imagination and a knowledge of folklore.

As soon as you look at *Lavender's Blue*, compiled by Kathleen Lines, you will probably guess that it was made in England. Harold Jones' illustrations give the book its unusual character. Both in color and in black and white, they suggest old engravings. The pages are neatly bordered; the figures are stiffish, not stylized yet not realistic either. There are wonderful details, as in the double-page spread of "Goosey, goosey gander" and others. Although the colors are muted, and there is little humor, the composition of the pictures holds your attention. "I love little pussy" is an example. Puss sits, tall, solemn, and mysterious, against an interior from which a door opens onto alluring streets. She is framed like a period portrait of a great lady and has an unyielding firmness about her that suggests a mind of her own. Show this book to the threes and fours to educate their young eyes. Use it with the fives, sixes, and sevens to discuss, mull over, and thoroughly enjoy pictures that are superlative in composition and color.

Tasha Tudor's illustrations have always

been notable for their delicate imagination and for their use of quaint costumes. Her *Mother Goose* has very properly been kept small to suit its exquisite minuteness. It is six and one-half by seven and one-half inches, an agreeable size for small hands to hold. Of the 77 verses, a number are unfamiliar, and this choice combines with the unusual pictures to make a distinctive edition that will please some and disturb others.

The costumes of the characters include Elizabethan, colonial, American pioneer, Kate Greenaway, and Godey styles, all charmingly portrayed in delicate pastel colors or soft black and white (the black more nearly

gray than black). The interiors and the landscapes are as beautiful as the costumes. The interpretation of the action is a surprising mixture of realism and imagination. For instance, "the cow jumped over the moon" is made completely possible by showing the cow running downhill with the distant moon seen through the cow's four legs. "Trip upon trenchers" is a humorous pioneer scene full of vigorous movement. "One, two, buckle my shoe" gives us a mother, tenderly dressing her little girl. The cozy domestic touch to many of the pictures is very appealing. Every verse has a picture and every other page is in color. This is a beautiful and unusual edition.

## Variants of Mother Goose

In addition to these books of *Mother Goose*, there are several collections of nursery rhymes which are fairly close in style and content to the old English jingles.

*The American Mother Goose* was compiled by Ray Wood and illustrated by Ed Hargis. Older children studying frontier life are interested and amused by this collection. The verses are both rougher and funnier than the English nursery rhymes and are as indigenous to America as a "possum up a gum stump." Here are such familiar doggerels as "I asked my mother for fifteen cents," "How much wood would a woodchuck chuck," "Mother, may I go out to swim," the long "Obediah jumped in the fire," "I went to the river," and a final section of riddles. The pen-and-ink sketches (p. 75) are full of hilarious touches that delight adults as much as they do the children. This book is not for the youngest, but it is fun for older children.

*The Rooster Crows; A Book of American Rhymes and Jingles* by Maud and Miska Petersham was a Caldecott winner. The subtitle is difficult to justify in spite of the inclusion of such American folk rhymes as "A bear went over the mountain," and "Mother, may I go out to swim." For the collection contains also such old-world rhymes as "Sally Waters," "Oats, peas, beans and barley grows," and

many others. The pictures are delightful. Children enjoy the colts, kittens, and bunnies which adorn the pages, and the pictures of children of long ago rocking wooden cradles or going a-hunting, and modern children jumping off haymows and enjoying themselves generally.

### ABC books

Other variants that have grown from Mother Goose's "A Apple Pie" are the pictorial ABC books of each generation. Edward Lear wrote one of the funniest, all in nonsense phonetics. Walter Crane made a charming *Baby's Own Alphabet*, and Kate Greenaway turned *A Apple Pie* into a thing of beauty.

Modern artists have also been intrigued by the austerity of a single letter and the possibilities of making it dramatic. Wanda Gág's *ABC Bunny* has a rhyming text with continuity unusual in such miscellanies. The large, dark woodcuts are relieved on each page by a single scarlet capital letter which suggests the small child's ABC blocks. The pictures (p. 550) and story make it a favorite.

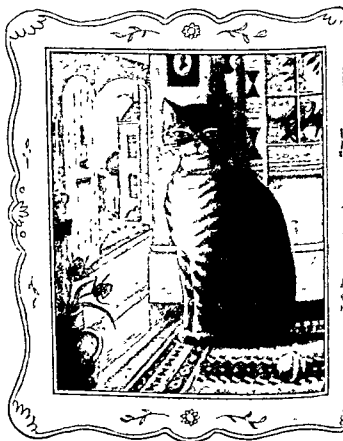
Fritz Eichenberg's *Ape in a Cape*, "an alphabet of odd animals," is both funny and phonetic. The "Goat in a boat" looks properly wild-eyed like the surprised "Fox in a

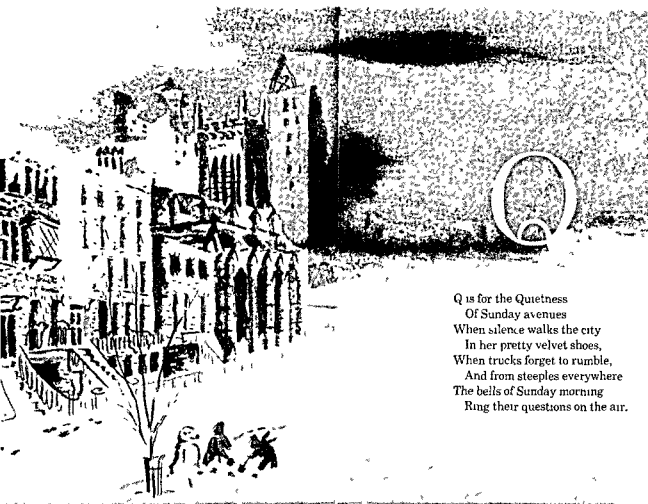
I've got a rocket  
In my pocket,  
I cannot stop to play.  
Away it goes!  
I've burnt my toes.  
It's Independence Day.



Goat in a boat

2.





Q is for the Quietness  
Of Sunday avenues  
When silence walks the city  
In her pretty velvet shoes,  
When trucks forget to rumble,  
And from steeples everywhere  
The bells of Sunday morning  
Ring their questions on the air.

5.

1. Illustration by Susanne Suba for *A Rocket in My Pocket* by Carl Withers, Holt, 1948, copyright 1948 by Carl Withers (book  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ ) 2. Illustration from Fritz Eichenberg's *Ape in a Cape*, Harcourt, Brace, 1952 (original in color, book  $8\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{7}{8}$ ) 3. Illustration from Maud and Miska Petersham's *The Rooster Crows*, Macmillan, 1945 (original in color, book  $8 \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ , picture  $6 \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ ) 4. Illustration by Harold Jones for *Lavender's Blue* compiled by Kathleen Lines, Oxford, 1954 (original in color, book  $7 \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ ) 5. Illustration by Helen Stone for *All Around the Town* by Phyllis McGinley, Lippincott, 1948, illustration copyright 1948 by Helen Stone (original in color, book  $7\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$ )

*Alphabet books and books of nursery rhymes owe much of their charm to the imaginative work of modern illustrators. A Rocket in My Pocket, a collection of children's chants and rhymed sayings, is enlivened by Susanne Suba's airy pen sketches, which match the gay absurdities of the jingles. Fritz Eichenberg's phonetic nonsense rhymes in his Ape in a Cape are reinforced with his colorful pictures of completely daft animals. Maud and Miska Petersham's American Mother Goose, The Rooster Crows, is full of action pictures, but for the couplet, "As sure as the vine twines 'round the stump, you're my darling sugar lump," they have chosen two quietly nestling rabbits. The pictures Harold Jones has made for Lavender's Blue are unusually stately and beautiful in composition. This austere cat sits above the poem, "I Love Little Pussy." Beautiful in text and illustrations, All Around the Town is an alphabet book about city sights and sounds. In this double-page spread, Helen Stone uses snow to help capture the mood of Phyllis McGinley's lovely verse. See how the picture encloses the poem.*

box." The text is not continuous, but the handsome, humorous pictures with their bright colors and big letters achieve a pictorial unity. The nursery crowd likes this book, and it inspires the older children to rhymes of their own—"A llama in Alabama," for example.

Roger Duvoisin's *A for the Ark*, for children seven to nine, shows Noah calling the animals alphabetically. The ducks dawdle because they like the rain. Some bears come with the B's, others with U for ursus. On they come, comical or impressive, but all decorative in the artist's most colorful style.

Also for older children is Phyllis McGinley's *All Around the Town*, an alphabet of city sights and sounds in lively verse, with

Helen Stone's pictures as delightful as the text. These witty lyrics combine letter sounds with the maximum music and meaning. For example, one verse begins "V is for the Vendor/A very vocal man." This book about city life delights children and adults.

The *Gay ABC* by Françoise is fresh and colorful, Clare Newberry's *Kittens' ABC* has the instantaneous appeal of all her cuddly cats, and little girls love Tasha Tudor's alphabet of an old doll, *A Is for Annabelle*. It is fortunate that the alphabet is once more in good standing with grown-ups, for children have always enjoyed it. How pleasant that writers and artists have combined so felicitously to make letters live for children!

## Uses of Mother Goose

### In the home

As soon as the baby attends to words, the mother can begin to say "Hush-a-bye baby" or "Bye Baby Bunting" at sleep time, or "Pat-a-cake" and "This little pig" at play time. As soon as he begins to like pictures, the mother should have a *Mother Goose* to hold on her lap along with the baby. It is good to say the verses over and over as many times as he wishes, but never to force him to listen or to urge the book on him. He will come to it when he is ready, if he is happily exposed to it. When the child begins to know the verses, the mother can say them with him at any time, with or without the book. The bathtub, the bed, the kitchen, or the park: all are proper settings for a happy exchange of rhymes. One day it might be well to surprise the child with a new edition, quite different from the one he has had. Or perhaps he could be taken to a library to see several editions and choose one to take home.

Through the years from two to five, he should be encouraged to say these verses until they are his forever. Children entering kindergarten would have better speech habits, and first-grade children would have a greater power with and feeling for words, if more

were done with *Mother Goose* in the homes. Knowing the verses expands the imagination, increases the vocabulary, and develops an ear for the music of words. Enjoying *Mother Goose* predisposes children to other books. Poring over the illustrations is an education in art appreciation. And meeting *Mother Goose* in the security of mother's or father's lap is a happy experience no child ever forgets.

### In the school

Occasionally, teachers get a little weary of *Mother Goose*. "The same old thing!" they say, and hurry the children to Dorothy Aldis or A. A. Milne, forgetting that to each crop of children *Mother Goose* is brand-new and infinitely diverting. So if you do find yourself a little tired of "Miss Muffet," "Humpty Dumpty," and all our old friends, just try a new edition. Fresh illustrations will spellbind almost any adult, and she will soon discover that she enjoys it as much as the children.

In large cities there is the problem of many children with "foreign" accents. Everywhere, there are children whose speech is slovenly. These verses are the best possible speech exercise. Children can look at the pictures and say the rhymes effortlessly and just for

(Illustration by Ed Hargis for *The American Mother Goose*  
by Ray Wood, Stokes, 1940 (book 6 x 8 1/4))

*Ed Hargis' homespun, humorous sketches have exactly caught the mood of the jingles in The American Mother Goose. Here are frontier people—grown-ups and children—who are neither graceful nor pretty but are full of fun and energy.*



Jay bird, Jay bird, settin' on a rail,  
Pickin' his teeth with the end of his tail,  
Mulberry leaves and calico sleeves  
All school teachers are hard to please.



[67]

fun, but the improvement in speech agility is surprising. The foreign-born child who knows no English can learn it rapidly from *Mother Goose*, and catch our characteristic speech rhythms in the process.

These are utilitarian reasons for using the verses. The chief reason is enjoyment. Whole class periods may be devoted to going through a new edition, saying the verses, savoring the pictures, discussing and comparing different collections the children know. A book that is completely worn out, past all further patching and gluing, may be cut up and such pictures as you can retrieve mounted on boards. These may go up on the walls or be used with the children as you would use a book. Sometimes older children "read" these to a younger group. Inexpensive editions should be on the children's own bookshelves for them to pick up in spare time.

Use *Mother Goose* to finish out a class period, or to fill in a time of waiting, just saying the verses spontaneously without a book. Let

the children dramatize some of them, with no set stage procedures. Of course, occasionally they are fun to use for an assembly, with the little children in the simplest costumes or just as usual. One kindergarten<sup>1</sup> has a big wooden book built by the manual training department. The cover opens and through the pages come the children as their favorite story-book characters. *Mother Goose* always supplies a group of these.

There are an infinite number of ways of using these old verses. If the six-year-olds are a little tired of the more familiar ones, try going through a collection to find some that no one knows. Our goal is to see that no child goes out of our homes, our kindergartens, or our first grades without knowing by heart dozens of these artless, picturesque, lyrical rhymes that, after all, constitute the child's most entertaining introduction to English poetry.

<sup>1</sup>Hazeldell School, Cleveland, Ohio; principal, Miss Edith Peters; kindergarten teacher, Miss Helen McCormick.



Illustration by Virginia Burton for  
*Song of Robin Hood* edited by Anne Malcolmson,  
Houghton, 1947 (book 9 x 11)

*It took Virginia Burton over three years to make the intricate, sometimes verse by verse illustrations for this glorious edition of Robin Hood. The swirling lines, as you turn the pages, give almost the illusion of movement.*

Children are universally fond of poems that tell a story. An eleven-year-old boy, after listening to his teacher read aloud the old ballad of "Sir Patrick Spens," remarked, "That is the best poem I ever heard."

"Why?" asked his teacher, in some surprise.

"Oh, 'cause the author gets right into the story. He doesn't waste any time describing things. It's more exciting that way."

This young critic summed up neatly the appeal that ballads and story-poems have for children of all ages. They tell a story in concentrated form, with the maximum excitement and the minimum words.

Many grown-ups can recall similar childhood enthusiasms for poetry or songs that told a story. The child makes no distinction between the types. It makes no difference to him whether it is an old folk song or folk ballad such as "The Babes in the Wood" or "Bonny Barbara Allan," or a modern song like "Robin Adair," or a modern story-poem like "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." What he



enjoys is the swift movement of verse or melody enhancing the dramatic appeal of a good story. The search for these story-poems is a rewarding one. It carries us back into folk rhymes and down to present-day narrative poems, ranging from hilarious nonsense to

romance and noble tragedy. Fortunately there are some rich collections of traditional ballads for us to examine, and these have come into existence partly because of people's continuous interest in the story element of songs and poetry.

## Origins of the popular ballads

Like all folk literature, the popular ballads were passed on by word of mouth long before they were printed. In England, Scotland, Germany, and Denmark, in particular, there was a large body of ballads passed on from person to person, village to village, and country to country. So popular were these story-poems and so rapid was the exchange of them that it is difficult today to determine whether a ballad is Danish in its origin or English or German. After all, these countries had a roving body of sailors who would be likely to pick up a good ballad and take it home, much as travelers carry popular songs from country to country today.

### The minstrels

When people began to wonder where the ancient ballads came from and who composed them, they thought first of the professional entertainers who flourished at the same time the ballads were growing in number and popularity. The Danes had their *scalds*, who were the "smoothers" or "polishers" of the language. The *scalds* gave instruction and also furnished entertainment by singing or reciting stories and poems. England had the Teutonic scop, "maker" or "poet." The scop was the forerunner of the gleeman or minstrel. As early as the fourth century, he traveled through the country singing and telling his stories in the mead halls. The minstrel, who succeeded the scop, rose to prominence in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries. Minstrels were attached to the households of kings and even to the religious houses. These men played the harp and sang songs of their own composition but were probably also the repositories and transmitters of songs heard

from other minstrels, or from the people of their own and other lands.

Many think that the ballads came to be what they are because they were composed and collected by minstrels, who were a more educated group than the mass of people and quite capable of polishing or even creating these poems. Bishop Percy (p. 81) believed they were the composition of minstrels, individual men whose names have been forgotten, and Sir Walter Scott (p. 82) shared this belief. The poems themselves offer significant testimony. The characters, for instance, are not as often rustics or villagers as they are the kings, queens, knights, nobles, highborn ladies, pages, and harpers in the courts the minstrel himself was used to. The choice of subjects is also typical of the minstrel, with many adaptations from French romance and the Arthurian tales. The language includes court words, sophisticated phrases, and such typical minstrel conventions as *burd* or *bryde* (maiden), *cramoisie* (crimson), *Christentie* (Christendom), *nourice* (nurse), *sheen* (beautiful), *brown brand* (sword), *merry men* (a standing phrase for companions in arms), *high-coled shoon* (high-cut shoes), and *bonie braes* (beautiful banks).

Probably the crowning argument for the minstrel origin of the ballads is the consummate skill with which many of them are composed. For instance, telling a story by questions and answers came late, not early, in literary development, and it is difficult to imagine such a use of it as in "Edward" stemming from any but professional poets. In "Edward" there is expert use not only of questions-and-answers to tell a grim and tragic tale but also of accumulative details.



Illustration by Arthur Rackham for "Lord Randal" In  
Some British Ballads, Dodd, Mead

Contrast the humorous "Get Up and Bar the Door" (p. 84) with this picture. Study the characterization of Lord Randal's sinister sweetheart and the romantic beauty of the scene, complete in every significant detail, even to the master's concern for his dying hounds.

### EDWARD<sup>1</sup>

"Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,

Edward, Edward,

Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,

And why sae sad gang yee O?"

"O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,

Mither, mither,

O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,

And I had nae mair bot hee O."

"Your haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,

Edward, Edward,

Your haukis bluid was nevir sae reid,

My deir son I tell thee O."

"O I hae killed my reid-roan steid,

Mither, mither,

O I hae killed my reid-roan steid,

That erst was sae fair and frie O."

"Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,

Edward, Edward,

Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,

Sum ither dule ye drie O."

<sup>1</sup>The popular ballads quoted in this chapter (with the exception of "The Ranzle, Tangle Gypsies" on page 89) are from *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, Students' Cambridge Edition, edited by George Lyman Kittredge.

"O I hae killed my fadir deir,

Mither, mither,

O I hae killed my fadir deir,

Alas, and wae is mee O!"

"And whatten penance wul ye drie for that,

Edward, Edward?

And whatten penance will ye drie for that?

My deir son, now tell me O."

"Ile set my feit in yonder boat,

Mither, mither,

Ile set my feit in yonder boat,

And Ile fare ovr the sea O."

"And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha,

Edward, Edward?

And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha,

That were sae fair to see O?"

"Ile let thame stand tul they doun fa,

Mither, mither,

Ile let thame stand tul they doun fa,

For here nevir mair maun I bee O."

"And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,

Edward, Edward?

And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,

Whan ye gang ovr the sea O?"

"The warldis room, late them beg thrae life,

Mither, mither,

The warldis room, late them beg thrae life,

For thame nevir mair wul I see O."

"And what wul ye leive to your ain mither deir,

Edward, Edward?

And what wul ye leive to your ain mither, deir?

My deir son, now tell me O."

"The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,

Mither, mither,

The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,

Sie counsells ye gawe to me O."

"Sir Patrick Spens," or "Spence," with its economy of words, episodes, and emotion is a little masterpiece of dramatic composition:

#### SIR PATRICK SPENCE

The king sits in Dumferling toun,  
Drinking the blude-reid wine:  
'O whar will I get guid sailor,  
To sail this schip of mine?'

Up and spak an eldern knight,  
Sat at the kings richt kne:  
'Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor  
That sails upon the se.'

The king has written a braid letter,  
And signd it wi his hand,  
And sent it to Sir Patrick Spence,  
Was walking on the sand.

The first line that Sir Patrick red,  
A loud lauch lauched he;  
The next line that Sir Patrick red,  
The teir blinded his ee.

'O wha is this has don this deid,  
This ill deid don to me,  
To send me out this time o' the yeir,  
To sail upon the sel

'Mak hast, mak hast, my mirry men all,  
Our guid schip sails the morne.'

'O say na sac, my master deir,  
For I feir a deadlie storme.

'Late late yestreen I saw the new moone,  
Wi the auld moone in hir arme,  
And I feir, I feir, my deir master,  
That we will cum to harme.'

O our Scots nobles wer richt laith  
To weet their cork-heild schoone;  
But lang owre a' the play wer playd,  
Thair hats they swam aboone.

O lang, lang may their ladies sit,  
Wi thair fans into their hand,  
Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence  
Cum sailing to the land.

O lang, lang may the ladies stand,  
Wi thair gold kems in their hair,  
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,  
For they'll se thame na mair.

Half owre, half owre to Aberdour,  
It's fittie fadom deip,  
And thair lies guid Sir Patrick Spence,  
Wi the Scots lords at his feit.

It would seem altogether improbable that uneducated people were capable of either the subtle restraint that related only the bare outlines of the tragic tale, or the sense of drama that could devise the surprise ending. Many other ballads could be cited which, like "Edward" and "Sir Patrick Spens," represent an advanced level of literary composition. That such ballads were originated by the minstrels seems, therefore, a conclusion that is at least logical and probable.

#### The clergy

Louise Pound in her *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* advances the theory that the ballads may well have begun with the clergy. She points out that the earliest ballads in the great collection by Francis Child (p. 82) have to do with Biblical history and legend. "Judas"—conceded to be the earliest remaining English ballad—is found in a thirteenth-century manuscript in the library of Trinity College, Cambridge. "Inter-Diabolus et Virgo," "The Carnal and the Crane," and "The Cherry Tree Carol" all occur early in Child's collection. The religious character of these ballads is illustrated by:

#### THE CHERRY TREE CAROL

Joseph was an old man,  
and an old man was he,  
When he wedded Mary,  
in the land of Galilee.

Joseph and Mary walked  
through an orchard good,  
Where was cherries and berries,  
so red as any blood.

Joseph and Mary walked  
through an orchard green,  
Where was berries and cherries,  
as thick as might be seen.

O then bespoke Mary,  
so meek and so mild;  
'Pluck me one cherry, Joseph,  
for I am with child.'

O then bespoke Joseph,  
with words most unkind:  
'Let him pluck thee a cherry  
that brought thee with child.'



Illustration by Arthur Rackham for "Lord Randal" In  
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Contrast the humorous "Get Up and Bar the Door" (p. 84) with this picture. Study the characterization of Lord Randal's sinister sweetheart and the romantic beauty of the scene, complete in every significant detail, even to the master's concern for his dying hounds.

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Mither, mither,  
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And I had nae mair bot hee O."

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Edward, Edward,  
Your hauks bluid was nevir sae reid,  
My deir son I tell thee O."  
"O I hae killed my reid roan steid,  
Mither, mither,  
O I hae killed my reid roan steid,  
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"Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,  
Edward, Edward,  
Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,  
Sun other dale ye due O."

<sup>1</sup>The popular ballad quoted in this chapter (with the exception of "The Ragged, Ragged Gypsies" on page 83) are from *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, London: Camden's Edition, edited by George Lyman Kitts.

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Edward, Edward?  
And whatten penance will ye drie for that?  
My deir son, now tell me O."  
"Ile set my feit in yonder boat,  
Mither, mither,  
Ile set my feit in yonder boat,  
And Ile fare ovir the sea O."

"And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha,  
Edward, Edward?  
And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha,  
That were sae fair to see O?"  
"Ile let thame stand tul they down fa,  
Mither, mither,  
Ile let thame stand tul they down fa,  
For here nevir mair maun I bee O."

"And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,  
Edward, Edward?  
And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife,  
Whan ye gang ovir the sea O?"  
"The warldis room, late them beg thrae life,  
Mither, mither,  
The warldis room, late them beg thrae life,  
For thame nevir mair wul I see O."

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And what wul ye leive to your ain mither, deir?  
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This ill deid don to me,  
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Wi thair gold kems in their hair,  
Waiting for thair ain deir lords,  
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'Pluck me one cherry, Joseph,  
for I am with child.'

O then bespoke Joseph,  
with words most unkind:  
'Let him pluck thee a cherry  
that brought thee with child.'

could compare them with the Bishop's elaborations.<sup>1</sup>

Certainly no ballad is more exciting than the story of the discovery of this seventeenth-century manuscript with its ballads copied laboriously by some unknown lover of these story-poems. Often the hand of the copier had been so weary that it wrote "they" for "the," "me" for "my," and even "pan and wale" for "wan and pale." If the good Bishop had postponed his visit to his friend for a few more weeks, perhaps the maids would have fed the whole manuscript to the flames. In that case, our present collection of traditional ballads and the romance of ballad collecting would have been much the poorer.

The Bishop's collection aroused enormous interest in ballads. Sir Walter Scott, for instance, was inspired by reading them in childhood to a lifelong search for them. Ballad "raids" he called his journeys into remote parts of Scotland to gather first hand from a shepherd or an old woman some little known ballad or variant of a familiar one.

**Francis James Child, 1825-1896**  
English and Scottish Popular Ballads

Since Scott's day other collectors have compared, criticized, and evaluated ballad sources, but the most notable compilation is the famous *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, in five volumes, edited by Francis J.

Child of Harvard. Child not only carried on exhaustive investigations into manuscript sources and current versions, but he also studied the ballads of other countries. There are 305 ballads in his collection, with copious notes and all known and accredited variants of each ballad. "Mary Hamilton" alone has twenty-eight variants. His five volumes represent the most thoroughly investigated collection of ballads that exists, and the final authority on the original sources of old ballads.

It is usually agreed that these volumes are for scholars only, and yet if a sixth-grade teacher feels moved to read "Sir Patrick Spens" to her children, she can build up a richer background for presenting the ballad by consulting the introduction found in Francis Child's great edition. She may not have the time or inclination to read all the eighteen variants, but at least her children will be interested to know that "Sir Patrick Spens" was remembered in so many places and by so many people, and that there exist today some eighteen different ways of telling his story.

If these five volumes are not available, then teachers should become acquainted with the one-volume edition made by Child's student and successor, George Lyman Kittredge—*English and Scottish Popular Ballads, Student's Cambridge Edition*. It contains the 305 ballads with two or three variants of each, and brief notes that are invaluable.

## Characteristics of the popular ballad

### Musical quality

One of the most striking characteristics of the popular ballad is its musical quality. The old ballad was a song story and its singing character is still evident in the lively tunes that survive with the words and in the lilting quality of both verses and refrains. "Bony Barbara Allan," for example, tells a tragic tale swiftly and movingly, but the

opening verse suggests at once that here is a song:

In Scarlet Town, where I was bound  
There was a fair maid dwelling,  
Whom I had chosen to be my own,  
And her name it was Barbara Allen.

There are almost as many tunes to "Barbara" as there are variations to the words, and if you know any of them it is difficult to read the words without singing them. This is also true of "The Gypsy Laddie," or its more familiar folk song variant, "The Raggle, Taggle

<sup>1</sup>Bishop Percy's *Foote Memorials, Ballads and Romances*

Gypsies." The tune is a compelling one, but if you do not know it, then you will find the ballad a fine dramatic one for reading. Even the most tragic ballads like "Edward" or "Lord Randal" have wistful, tender airs that somehow soften the tragedy. The music of "Lizie Lindsay" has an attractive swing, and there are dozens of other ballads that seem to prove the old woman's contention that they were made for singing.<sup>1</sup>

In many ballads this songlike quality is enhanced by refrains. The refrain of "The Cruel Brother" sounds like tripping dance steps:

*There was three ladies playd at the ba,  
With a hey ho and a lillic gay  
There came a knight and playd oer them a'  
As the primrose spreads so sweetly.*

One version of the "The Gypsy Laddie" begins:

*There was a gip come oer the land,  
He sung so sweet and gaily;  
He sung with glee, neath the wild wood tree,  
He charmed the great lord's lady.  
Ring a ding a ding go ding go da,  
Ring a ding a ding go da dy  
Ring a ding a ding go ding go da,  
She's gone with the gipsy Davy.*

"Robin Hood and Little John" starts out with a vigorous refrain:

*When Robin Hood was about twenty years old,  
With a hey down down and a down  
He happend to meet Little John,  
A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,  
For he was a lusty young man.*

The second, fourth, and fifth lines somehow suggest men banging on the table with their fists or with mugs of "nut brown ale," in jovial accompaniment to a familiar song.

Some of the ballad refrains become so lively that it is easy to imagine a still more vigorous bodily response. For instance, it is impossible to read aloud "The Wife Wrapt in Wether's Skin" without feeling that the refrain could readily carry an individual or a

crowd into some jig steps between the lines of the story. Try reading the following stanzas aloud for yourself, and perhaps even jiggling or "tap dancing" the refrain.

*There livd a laird down into Fife,  
Riftly, raftly, now, now, now  
An he has married a bonny young wife.  
Hey Jock Simpleton, Jenny('s) white petticoat,  
Robin a Rashes, now, now, now.*

*He courted her and he brought her hame,  
Riftly, raftly, now, now, now  
An thought she would prove a thrifty dame,  
Hey Jock Simpleton, Jenny('s) white petticoat,  
Robin a Rashes, now, now, now.*

Such a dancing, prancing refrain as this brings to mind at once Gummere's (p. 80) picture of a group of people stirring up a ballad by a kind of spontaneous combustion of high spirits, shouting and jiggling while the next man thinks up another episode of the story. It reminds us also that the word *ballad* comes from *ballare*, meaning "to dance." Some of these refrains certainly give evidence of a relationship to dancing, and it is not a bad idea to let the children get a feeling for the essentially musical character of the ballads by having them sing some and suit gentle rhythmic movements to the words of others or even try a lively dance step to the lustier refrains.

### Dramatic quality

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the ballads is their dramatic and rapidly unfolding plots. The ballads already quoted are good examples. In "Edward" you sense immediately that something is wrong; then you learn that he has killed his own father, but not till the last stanza are you told that the mother herself had planned the crime and urged her son to it. "Lord Randal," opening peacefully with a mother questioning her son about his hunting, hints only in the melancholy last line of each verse—"For I'm wearied wi' hunting, and fain wad lie down"—that all is not well. As the questioning goes on you learn that his hawks and his hounds died of the food he gave them from his own plate.

<sup>1</sup>The old woman who gave Sir Walter Scott so many of his ballads burst into tears when she saw them in print. She said, "They were made for singing and not for reading, but ye ha'e broken the charm now, and they'll never be sung anair."

Then you find out that his "true love" is the poisoner and that Lord Randal will die, too (see illustration, p. 78). This last-minute revelation of the villain is nowhere more strikingly employed than in "The Daemon Lover." In this ballad, it is not until the faithless wife has gone with her former lover on his ship that she "espies" his cloven hoof and knows she has eloped with the devil himself. The children enjoy this example of poetic justice and take the devastating conclusion in cheerful mood.

There are of course some comic plots too, but they are distinctly in the minority. "King John and the Abbot of Canterbury" is amusing. "The Crafty Farmer" outwitting the thief is one of the children's favorites, and they like even better the broad slapstick farce of the stubborn old couple in "Get Up and Bar the Door."

#### GET UP AND BAR THE DOOR

It fell about the Martinmas time,  
And a gay time it was then,  
When our goodwife got puddings to make,  
And she's boid them in the pan.  
The wind sae cauld blew south and north,  
And blew into the floor;



Quoth our goodman to our goodwife,  
'Gae out and bar the door.'

'My hand is in my hussyfslap,  
Goodman, as ye may see:  
An it shoud nae be baird this hundred year.  
It's no be baird for me.'

They made a paction twen them twa,  
They made it firm and sure,  
That the first word whae'er shoud speak,  
Shoud rise and bar the door.

Then by there came two gentlemen,  
At twelc o'clock at night,  
And they could neither see house nor hall,  
Nor coal nor candle-light.

'Now whether is this a rich man's house,  
Or whether is it a poor?'  
But neer a word wad ane o them speak,  
For barring of the door.

And first they ate the white puddings,  
And then they ate the black;  
Tho muckle thought the goodwife to hersel,  
Yet neer a word she spake.

Then said the one unto the other,  
'Here, man, tak ye my knife;  
Do ye tak aff the auld man's beard,  
And I'll kiss the goodwife.'

'But there's nae water in the house,  
And what shall we do than?'  
'What ails ye at the pudding-broo,  
That boils into the pan?'

O up then started our goodman,  
An angry man was he:  
'Will ye kiss my wife before my een,  
And scad me wi pudding-bree?'

Then up and started our goodwife,  
Gied three skips on the floor:  
'Goodman, you've spoken the foremost word,  
Get up and bar the door.'

The folk-tale plot of trial by riddle, with a bright person substituting for a stupid one, is amusingly used in "King John and the

Illustration by Arthur Rackham for 'Get Up and Bar the Door' in *Some British Ballads*, Dodd, Mead

Here is a farcical situation admirably suggested by the characterizations of the stubborn old pair.



Abbot of Canterbury" ("King John and the Bishop"). The charming "Wee Wee Man" has another folk-tale plot, that of the fairy who disappears if you take your eyes off him. "Lizie Lindsay" is mildly humorous, with the young Lord disguised as a shepherd's son and poor Lizie tramping the soles off her shoes, but the end of this ballad, where MacDonald reveals all his grandeur, turns it into a cheerful and dramatic romance. "A Gest of Robyn Hode" contains some humorous plots, the episode of Little John being a favorite.

On the whole, ballad plots are more likely to be tragic than humorous. They celebrate bloody and terrible battles, ghosts that return to haunt their true or their false loves, fairy husbands of human maids, infanticide, murders, faithless love punished, faithful love not always rewarded—sad, sad romances and tragedies in every possible combination. Sadder still, there is not always the clear retribution that is found in the fairy tales. Ballad villains are all too likely to make a go of their fell deeds, and the victim dies off with hardly time to curse them properly. Since children always disapprove of this lack of poetic justice, the ballads have to be combed carefully if you are to find a fair proportion with satisfactory, or just, endings. When you wish to use a sad one like "Bonny Barbara Allan" or "Lord Randal," then you had better sing it. The gentle music softens the gloom and leaves the children feeling so tender toward the victim that they almost forget the villain.

### Abrupt beginnings and endings

The ballads often begin right in the middle of a complicated story. "The Daemon Lover" ("James Harris") opens with a brisk dialogue and not a "he said" to guide you:

'O where have you been, my long, long love,  
This long seven years and mair?  
'O I'm come to seek my former vows  
Ye granted me before.'  
'O hold your tongue of your former vows,  
For they will breed sad strife;  
'O hold your tongue of your former vows,  
For I am become a wife.'

And there you are with a melodrama well under way. Three ragged gypsies sing at the door of a fine lady, and she comes promptly down the stairs—so the first verse of "The Raggle, Taggle Gypsies" ("The Gypsy Laddie") (p. 89) tells you, and you never do find out why. These are typical ballad beginnings—abrupt, cryptic, and provocative. You have to keep reading to find out what on earth everyone is up to and why. The intimate conversation, which is a favorite ballad beginning, is certainly one of the best possible devices for getting the reader's bewildered attention, and the lack of explanation sets the imagination to work and keeps the reader scanning the verses for clues.

The conclusions are sometimes equally abrupt. In "Get Up and Bar the Door," after the old man breaks his vow and speaks first, the ballad concludes with the old woman skipping around in high glee. But what of those two roguish gentlemen? Nothing more is said about them, and you are left wondering mildly what happened next. Sometimes the ballad ends on a teasing note. What does that mean, you ask yourself, and go on wondering. In the last verse of "The Wife of Usher's Well," when the ghosts of the widow's three sons hear the cock crow and know they must be gone, one of them says:

*Fare ye weel, my mother dear!  
Fareweel to barn and byre!  
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass  
That kindles my mother's fire!*

There is a suggestion of a sad romance in the last two lines—a poor ghost leaving behind not only his mother, his barn, and his byre, but his heart's delight as well! When these cryptic endings set the listener's imagination to work, they are almost as satisfactory as if everything were concluded in neat thoroughgoing style. It gives the hearer a sense of making the story himself. He arrives at his own private solution; the story is therefore partly his own and pleases him. Certainly the old balladists were past masters at plunging the listener into the middle of a hair-raising

tale and leaving him at the end with a good deal of the story to wind up for himself.

### Description

Intent on telling a dramatic story, ballad makers were not concerned with either the details of the landscape or the emotions of the characters. Nature is used as a highly conventionalized setting for a tale. "It fell upon a Martinmass" or "at Lammas time" or "in the merry month of May" are favorite phrases. So, depending on the season, the nights may be "lang and mirk" or green leaves "a-springing" or lovers may walk along a green road "the greenest ever was seen." Maidens are "the fairest ever seen," and men are "lords of high degree" or "proper men." These are ballad conventions that made composition easy and memorizing even easier. When "Sir Patrick Spens" receives the "braid letter," "a loud lauch lauched he" and then "a teir blinded his ee." Such conventions take care of the emotions. The characters may "rive" their hair, and of course they die for love right on schedule, so that they can be buried side by side and roses can grow from their graves—

*Until they could grow no higher,  
And twisted and twined in a true lover's knot  
Which made all the parish admire.*

Today such standardized phrases are called clichés, but they served a useful purpose in the ballad by easing up the strain of composition and centering attention on the action, or drama, which was the heart of the poem.

### Incremental repetition

Incremental repetition is an aid to storytelling. This is a ballad convention in which each verse repeats the form of the preceding verse but with a new turn that advances the story. Its skillful use (see "Edward," p. 78) seems to suggest minstrel origin of the ballads. But because it simplifies storytelling, it is also used as an argument for communal origin. "The Cruel Brother" gives a breathing space for the composer with its formal refrains and

leads up to the climax with its incremental repetition. The story concerns the fate of the fair lady whose lover forgets to ask her brother John for his consent to their marriage. This oversight is punished when John stabs the bride. To her lover the bride says:

*'O, lead me gently up the hill,  
With a hey ho and a lillie gay  
'And I'll there sit down, and make my will.'  
As the primrose spreads so sweetly.*  
*'O what will you leave to your father dear?  
With a hey ho and a lillie gay  
'The siller-shode steed that brought me here.'  
As the primrose spreads so sweetly.*  
*'What will you leave to your mother dear?  
With a hey ho and a lillie gay  
'My velvet pall and my silken gear.'  
As the primrose spreads so sweetly.*  
*'What will you leave to your sister Anne?  
With a hey ho and a lillie gay  
'My silken scarf and my gowden fan.'  
As the primrose spreads so sweetly.*  
*'What will you leave to your brother John?  
With a hey ho and a lillie gay  
'The gallows tree to hang him on.'  
As the primrose spreads so sweetly.*

Incremental repetition is used in many ballads. If you read several of these, you will find it is easy to imagine a leader starting the pattern by asking the question, a crowd of people singing the refrain, and the same leader, or perhaps the next man in the circle, answering the question.

### Anonymity

Whether the ballad was composed by a singing throng or a forgotten minstrel or a "curtal friar," the author of these old ballads remains strictly anonymous. The use of the first person is comparatively rare, perhaps only in an opening line, and then no more of the observer. The charming "Wee Wee Man" begins, "As I was walking all alone" and records the adventures of the speaker when he meets a fairy man. Nevertheless, the story concerns the fairy world and not the author of the tale. Who he was, how he felt,

you never learn. He merely records the facts of the adventure as objectively as possible and remains himself completely anonymous. The exciting adventure of Janet, who rescues the bewitched "Tam Lin" from the fairies, begins with a command:

O I forbid you, maidens a',  
That wear gowd on your hair,  
To come or gae by Carterhaugh,  
For young Tam Lin is there.

Perhaps this is an old nurse speaking to her charges, the high-born maidens, "who wear gowd on their hair," but whoever it is, she never speaks again, and the story becomes a straight reporting of the adventure. These are typical examples of the brief and occasional ballad use of the first person. For the most part, the storytelling is impersonal and gives you not the slightest inkling of the author's point of view or station in life. It is good reporting in the most modern sense of the word.

### Subject matter

The ballads, as we have observed, run the whole gamut of subjects and emotions. *Farce* is well represented by the children's favorites "The Crafty Farmer" and "Get Up and Bar the Door." Subtler *comedy* is "King John and the Abbot of Canterbury" ("King John and the Bishop"). In "A Gest of Robyn Hode" there is a gay air of comedy throughout the ballads with the exception of the one about

Robin Hood's tragic death. Children like especially the tales of "Little John," "Friar Tuck," "Maid Marian," "Allen a Dale," "The King's Disguise," and "Robin Hood Rescuing Three Squires." These are pleasant to use interchangeably with the prose version of *Robin Hood*.

Sinister *crime* abounds in the ballads, but in "Edward," "The Bonny Earl of Murray," "Lord Randal," and even in "The Twa Sisters," attention is focused on the tragedy of the victim rather than on the horror of the crime. "Sir Patrick Spens" is a fine example of *noble tragedy*, of men giving their lives in the performance of duty. The great battles may be included in this group ("The Hunting of the Cheviot," "The Battle of Harlaw," "The Battle of Otterburn"), but they are, generally, too difficult for the elementary school.

The stories of *romance* such as "Lizie Lindsay," "Bonny Barbara Allan," and "The Raggle, Taggle Gypsies" ("The Gypsy Laddie"), are on the other hand well suited to older children. For *fairytale*, "The Wee Wee Man," "Tam Lin," and even "Hind Etin" are usable if the stories are outlined briefly for the children in advance. "The Wife of Usher's Well" is a good *ghost story* and "The Daemon Lover" ("James Harris"), "Lord Randal," and "Bonny Barbara Allan" are *melodramas* which satisfy the most avid appetite for lurid plots. *Farce*, *comedy*, *crimes*, *tragedies*, *romance*, *fairy tales*, and *ghost stories* are all found in ballads.

## Using the traditional ballad with children

### Language difficulty

The old ballads are not for the primary but belong to the children of the middle and upper grades or junior high schools. One glance at these ballads shows the reading difficulties they present for even eleven- and twelve-year-old children. They offer almost insuperable reading obstacles for any except the most superior readers. Not only do they employ difficult and obsolete words, but some

of the ballads are in dialect, some are in a phonetic idiom that can only be guessed at, and others use familiar words which are so oddly spelled or abbreviated ("ba" for ball) that it is impossible for the average reader to recognize the words when he sees them. Most of these difficulties, however, disappear when the child hears the ballads read aloud.

Children generally like dialect. If, then, you are going to read aloud "Sir Patrick Spens" to the children, you can tell them

that it is in Scotch dialect and old, old Scotch at that. You might tell them something of the story first, or you might even read it in plain English, either before or after reading the original version. This is the way it reads in modern style:

*The king sits in Dumferling town,  
Drinking the blood red wine:  
'O where will I get a good sailor,  
To sail this ship of mine?'*

*Then up and spoke an elderly knight,  
Sat at the king's right knee:  
'Sir Patrick Spence is the best sailor  
That sails upon the sea.'*

In the fourth verse where "a loud laugh laughed he" and then "a tear blinded his eye" a good rhyme is upset, but can be restored when you swing back to the "ee" of dialect. This may be a very unorthodox way of dealing with folk ballads, but the barrier of language should not keep these exciting story-poems from children. They like the dialect when they hear it if they know what it means. Translating it into modern English will make the meaning clear.

#### **A ballad program**

A group of student teachers who had become ballad enthusiasts decided to try them out in a kind of ballad recital for fifth and sixth grades. They chose a school where the children were not only poor readers but were the second lowest in the city on their intelligence scores. One student prepared an informal introduction, telling the children something of the history and origin of the old ballads. She also told them that while many of the words might sound queer, it was because some of them were an older form of English like "thou" and "thee" and because some of the ballads were in dialect, and then she gave examples. She also said to them, "I rather think you will understand all the stories, but if you don't, we'll come around to your rooms later, and you can ask us about them."

The student teachers sang "Bonny Barbara Allan" to the children. They gave a crude

dramatization of "Get Up and Bar the Door" and "King John and the Bishop." They read "The Daemon Lover," "The Crafty Farmer," and "Lizie Lindsay" in parts, one girl reading the narration and other girls reading the speeches of the different characters. After presenting "Lizie Lindsay" as a drama, they sang part of it, for "Lizie" has a catchy tune. "The Wee Wee Man," "The Wife of Usher's Well," and "Sir Patrick Spens" were read as solos, and the whole group of students ended by singing "The Raggle, Taggle Gypsies."

#### **Children's responses to the ballads**

The children were attentive throughout the program. They laughed spontaneously and heartily at the funny ones, gave "Sir Patrick Spens" and "The Wife of Usher's Well" breathless attention, applauded spontaneously and heartily at the end, and went out humming "The Raggle, Taggle Gypsies." The ballads they asked for in their rooms most often were, of course, the two broadly comic ones, "The Crafty Farmer" and "Get Up and Bar the Door," but they also wanted to learn to sing "Bonny Barbara Allan," and they asked to have "Sir Patrick Spens" read again. These responses, rather than their conventional expressions of enjoyment, were taken as evidences that they had liked the ballads. When the students who had given the program visited the children in their rooms, the discussion of the ballads was unforced and brisk. Checking up casually, they were astonished to find that no major point in any story had been missed. The plots of the ballads stood out clearly in the minds of the whole group of children. To be sure, the students had introduced each ballad carefully, clearing up obscurities of words or meanings in advance; but, as they said later, "We do the same thing in a history lesson and still the children don't get it all." Memory and understanding in the case of the ballads are helped by the emotional impact of the startling and powerful plots.

A sixth-grade teacher had a group of over-age children who were addicted to the comic-

strip magazines and the more lurid movies. She started reading some of the old ballads aloud to them. The ones they liked best she read over and over, letting them say the verses along with her. To their surprise, they learned a number of the ballads in this way without consciously trying to memorize. When they commented on this, she told them she supposed people had always found them easy to learn, and had enjoyed repeating them. That is why they still exist today, after hundreds of years of being learned and passed on from one person to another.

There was a sudden burst of ballad subjects in the art activities, and the art teacher was taxed, not only for more help on figure drawing but for all sorts of information about costumes, furniture, armor, the great hall, and the like. There was a dramatic quality about their ballad illustrations that testified to the moving character of the themes. Occasionally an anachronism would startle the teacher and would gradually dawn upon the children. One large and striking crayon sketch of "Sir Patrick Spens" showed some cautious "knichts" leaping overboard securely girdled with life preservers. This error was gravely explained to the young artist by the children themselves.

Since the teacher kept the discussion unforced, a few of the ballads drew no comments from the children. If the children never asked for those ballads, the teacher let them drop. On the other hand, with every saying of the favorite ballads, questions would come with a rush. "Did that old knight have it in for Sir Patrick Spens when he got the king to send him off to sea in the middle of the winter?" "Did Sir Patrick have to go to sea when he knew there was going to be a storm?" "Why couldn't he just throw the king's letter away and not go?" Such questions provoked considerable discussion and led to some wholesome conclusions about duty and courage. Another group argued at length about the conduct of the wife in "The Raggle, Taggle Gypsies." Why did a fine lady leave her home and her husband, they won-

dered. Here is the folk-song version that was read aloud by the teacher:

#### THE RAGGLE, TAGGLE GYPSIES

There were three gypsies a-come to my door,  
And downstairs ran this lady, O.  
One sang high and another sang low,  
And the other sang "Bonnie,  
Bonnie Biskay, O."

Then she pulled off her silken gown,  
And put on hose of leather, O.  
With the ragged, ragged rags about her door  
She's off with the Raggle, Taggle Gypsies, O.

'Twas late last night when my lord came home,  
Inquiring for his lady, O.  
The servants said on every hand,  
"She's gone with the Raggle,  
Taggle Gypsies, O."

"Oh, saddle for me my milk-white steed,  
Oh, saddle for me my pony, O,  
That I may ride and seek my bride  
Who's gone with the Raggle,  
Taggle Gypsies, O."

Oh, he rode high and he rode low,  
He rode through woods and copses, O,  
Until he came to an open field,  
And there he espied his lady, O.

"What makes you leave your house and lands?  
What makes you leave your money, O?  
What makes you leave your new-wedded lord  
To go with the Raggle, Taggle Gypsies, O?"

"What care I for my house and lands?  
What care I for money, O,  
What care I for my new-wedded lord?  
I'm off with the Raggle, Taggle Gypsies, O."

"Last night you slept on a goose-feather bed,  
With the sheet turned down so bravely, O.  
Tonight you will sleep in the cold, open field,  
Along with the Raggle, Taggle Gypsies, O."

"What care I for your goose-feather bed,  
With the sheet turned down so bravely, O?  
For tonight I shall sleep in a cold, open field,  
Along with the Raggle, Taggle Gypsies, O."

Was this wife who left her home just a faithless woman like the wife in "The Daemon Lover"? One of the girls thought not. "Perhaps," she said slowly, "perhaps she was a gypsy girl herself." Others caught the impli-

cation immediately and carried it further. "Maybe she thought it would be a fine thing to have a grand house and a rich husband, but when her own people came for her, she just couldn't stand being cooped up any longer; so she went with them." A logical and charitable conclusion!

### Correlation with school subjects

The Scotch and English ballads may be utilized in several ways. Sometimes, if the children are reading a prose version of Robin Hood, the teacher can read aloud to them the ballad sources of the tales. Or, in a dramatization of Robin Hood, Allen a Dale can sing some of the other old ballads, and the merry men can sing or say still others. The ballads make a fine center for English-class activities. A ballad assembly can be given by the children along lines similar to the student-teachers' assembly. In a dramatization of medieval life, a wandering minstrel can entertain the company in the great hall by saying or singing the ballads. Some of these he can say alone, but the company can join in with other ballads that have refrains. Ballads lend themselves to choral speaking and to dramatization, and a few of the farcical ones are excellent for shadow or puppet plays. The heroic ballads are usually better read or spoken by an individual.

While the bulk of the ballads undoubtedly belongs to the high schools, a few of them

have been effectively introduced into the elementary schools at the upper-grade levels. They are so dramatic and so condensed that they grip both the emotions and the imagination. A ballad ends and the mind goes right on playing with the ideas—using either words or paints. The melodrama of the plots is not unlike that of the morning newspapers, but the meager details are a protection against vulgarity and horror. In these old story-poems, the adolescent finds some of the excitement for which he longs. He finds romance, adventure, tragedy, and farce told with such rigorous economy that they challenge his imagination and rouse an active response. Older boys particularly dislike descriptive nature poems and have a violent antipathy for poems that teach moral lessons. On the other hand, they hunger and thirst for heroics and excitement, and the old English and Scotch ballads can supply both.

There is little doubt that the success of old ballads with children depends largely upon the teacher who presents them. She must not only know them well and like them, but she must be able to read them aloud with the simplicity and vigor they deserve. Ballads should be heard and not read silently if children are to enjoy them. Any teacher who can read them aloud well will have children who not only like the ballads but who develop a fresh faith in the fun and excitement that can be derived from verse.

## Folk ballads in the United States

### American descendants of the popular ballad

Early settlers brought the old Scotch and English ballads to this country, and children in states as remote from each other as Pennsylvania and Texas, or Wisconsin and the Carolinas, heard their parents and their grandparents singing the same ballads that *their* grandparents had sung in the mother country. "Bonny Barbara Allan" is a good example of a ballad that was carried by the

colonists and pioneer families from one end of the United States to the other.

The Child collection stimulated such an interest in these old story-songs that collectors began to search for and record American variants of them. They found, as you might expect, a large number of the Child ballads being sung or recited throughout the country, but especially in the Southern mountains. There the mountaineers, cut off from the main stream of immigration and changing customs, had preserved the songs their ances-

tors brought with them. Sometimes "Barbara Allan" was "Barbery Allen" or "Barbara Ellen," but in every version she was the same heartless girl whose cruelty caused her lover's death. "Lord Randal" might be hailed democratically as "Johnny Randall," or even "Jimmy Randolph," but he was still begging his mother to make his bed soon for he was "sick at the heart and fain wad lie down." Sometimes the verses had been so altered and patched together that they were incoherent. Most of them had, however, come through with less change than you might expect from several hundred years of oral transmission.

Cecil J. Sharp (1859-1924), an English musician, made early and outstanding collections of these survivals of the Scotch-English ballads in the Southern mountains of the United States. His books are valuable contributions to ballad literature in this country, and other collectors have followed his lead. Older children will enjoy the ballads in Sharp's first two volumes, while children as young as three and four are charmed with the *Nursery Songs*.<sup>1</sup>

These collections bear witness to the fact that the traditional ballads are still flourishing in places far removed from their source. Evidently the old woman who gave Sir Walter Scott so many of his ballads was overly pessimistic when she burst into tears at the sight of them in print. She would be surprised to hear voices of invisible singers, coming from boxes (phonographs, radios, and television), singing her ballads even as they were sung long ago. Or she might attend a meeting at the cabin of the "Traipsin' Woman" (p. 93) down in the mountain region of Kentucky, and hear her old songs sung to the accompaniment of homemade fiddles or dulcimers. The traditional ballads of England and Scotland did not die between the covers of books but were kept gaily alive by the descendants of the early settlers who brought them to this country. Printing seems merely to have stim-

ulated a greater pride and a more sustained interest in them.

### Native ballads

Once the collectors set to work gathering the American variants of the old-world ballads, they began to encounter new ballads and folk songs that are as native to the United States as buckwheat cakes and hominy grits. Lumberjacks, slaves, miners, cowboys, chain gangs, railroad men, cotton pickers, and sailors had all been singing at their work, it seemed, and they had been singing less of the sufferings of Barbara Allan than of their own toil and hardships. Here was a rich treasure of ballad-making still in the process of creation. These songs are not as finished or as noble as their Scotch-English predecessors. On the whole, they are rougher and sometimes more sordid in language and theme. They do, however, achieve a wistful melancholy or a happy-go-lucky philosophy or a sheer braggadocio that seems to distinguish certain groups of our hardy settlers or certain workers such as the Western cowboys.

The native ballads of the United States tell, on the whole, fewer coherent and dramatic stories than the Scotch-English group; but they sing with or without the music. There is likely to be a chorus to these homogenous ballads, but so completely gone are the "Hey nonny nonnies," that it is almost a shock to encounter a "Derry down, down, down, derry down," in "Red Iron Ore" (p. 95). The refrains in these native ballads are more likely to repeat a phrase, or go off into a three- or four-line chorus. The Negro spirituals reach heights of religious fervor never attained in any old-world ballad, but for their full beauty they need their music; the words alone are rarely significant. The cowboy ballads have sometimes a philosophic or a wistful air that is more in the mood of a song than of a story. The language is easier for us, even the dialect or vernacular, but some of it is too rough for children. Among these ballads, as in the English and Scottish popular ballads, there is material composed by adults for adults

<sup>1</sup>C. J. Sharp, compiler, *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*; *American English Folk Songs*; *Nursery Songs from the Appalachian Mountains*.

with themes as well as language unsuited to children. No sensible youngster will be hurt by browsing through the collections, but ballads for use in the classroom need to be selected by the teacher.

Once children catch the idea that ballads are still remembered and treasured, they may turn collectors and discover some ballads in their own families or communities. Once they realize that ballads are still being made not merely by professional poets imitating old

## Collectors and collections

There are many collectors of North American ballads whose books cover a wide variety of folk songs and sources. Among the first of these are John and Alan Lomax, Louise Pound, and Carl Sandburg. Their collections are of major importance as sources.

**John A. Lomax, 1872-1948**

**Alan Lomax, 1915-**

*Cowboy Songs and*

*Other Frontier Ballads*

*American Ballads and Folk Songs*

John A. Lomax was born in Mississippi and later went to Texas, where he graduated from the State University and also taught. Equipped with a rich background of Negro folk music, he became interested in the work-songs of the cowboys and set about collecting them. He followed far trails to get a new ballad or a variant of an old one. When his *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads* appeared in 1910, it had the distinction of being the first copyrighted collection of native American ballads. His "Collector's Note" not only tells how he recorded the ballads but gives a vivid picture of the loneliness of life on the range and the consequent reaction of reckless hilarity when the cowboy strikes town. Every phase of cowboy life is reflected in these wistful or philosophic or rambunctious ballads. "A Home on the Range," "Whoopee Ti Yi Yo, Git Along, Little Dogies," and "Good-by, Old Paint" are favorites not only

forms but by isolated peoples celebrating events that seem to them tragic or comic or dramatic, then the children, too, may wish to try group composition of a ballad. It is more fun and less difficult than it sounds. Certainly newspapers supply stories of unsung heroes that are the very stuff of which these story-poems have always been made. The radio makes constant use of such episodes for sketches and dramas. Why not try casting them into ballad form?

with children but with radio audiences as well. *American Ballads and Folk Songs* (1934) is a more comprehensive collection covering the songs of railroad hands, chain gangs, miners, lumberjacks, sailors, Negroes, and other distinctive groups. Both these books include music that has been kept as close to the original as possible, while the words retain the broad dialect characteristic of the group from which they stemmed.

John Lomax's son, Alan Lomax, is now continuing to collect ballads from all parts of this country and outside it from Acadia to the Bahamas. Their books are important sources from which most later collections borrow heavily.

**Louise Pound, 1872-**

*American Ballads and Songs*

Louise Pound was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, and is a professor of English at the University of Nebraska. She is a folklorist whose book *Poetic Origins and the Ballad* established her as an authority in that field. Her *American Ballads and Songs* (1922) is a small volume but contains an unusually varied and typical selection. Miss Pound does not tell us how she made her collection, but in her notes she acknowledges both manuscript sources and first-hand versions from singers widely scattered over the country from North Carolina to Wyoming. The lack of music in this book throws the emphasis back upon the words or story of the ballads, which has some



advantages if you happen to be interested in using them with your group as poems rather than songs.

### **Carl Sandburg, 1878- The American Songbag**

Carl Sandburg (p. 154) was born in Galesburg, Illinois, and grew up in the Middle West. His writing has been concerned from first to last with the people, places, and spirit of the United States. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the man whose six-volume biography of Abraham Lincoln is an outstanding achievement becoming interested in the songs and ballads of Americans. Although his book, *The American Songbag*, borrows heavily from the Lomax and other collections, his entertaining commentaries add much to the unique charm of the book. Mr. Lomax criticizes some of the musical settings for being "too elaborate and modern," but the variety, the geographic range, the classifications, and the notes in the *Songbag* all help to make this big book an important one for schools and homes.

While these four collectors have included remnants of the older Scotch and English ballads, most of the material is native. Mr. Lomax says:

The frontier has been beaten back to the accompaniment of singing; and there are yet eddies where such songs are created. A life of isolation, without books or newspapers or telephones or radio, breeds songs and ballads.

To which Mr. Sandburg adds:

The American Songbag comes from the hearts and voices of thousands of men and women. They made new songs, they changed old songs, they carried songs from place to place, they resurrected and kept alive dying and forgotten songs. Ballad singers of centuries ago and mule-skinners alive and singing today helped make this book.

### **Other collectors and ballad-makers**

Kentucky is rich in balladry and in sons and daughters who are still collecting and singing its songs. John Jacob Niles of Lexington,

Kentucky, who makes his own dulcimers and is a one-man library of ballads, tells of a ballad find. In Murphy, North Carolina, he encountered a group of traveling evangelists. One of them, a girl named Annie Morgan, sang unaccompanied the plaintive:

*I wonder as I wander out under the sky,  
How Jesus, our Saviour, did come for to die  
For poor ornery people like you and like I  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky....*

After the meeting, Mr. Niles paid her to repeat the song for him until he had the words and music recorded; then she drove away with the others and has never been heard of since. She probably does not know that her wistful, beautiful song is sung by great artists to a widespread radio and television audience.

The ballad albums of both Mr. Niles and Burl Ives are now so popular with collectors of records that it is difficult to find them in stock. The two men have entirely different styles. The curious falsetto that Mr. Niles uses is at first difficult to get used to. Mr. Ives has the vigorous, forthright style of the professional singer and has done much to popularize ballads on television and radio and in moving pictures. Mr. Niles' "The Seven Joys of Mary" and Mr. Ives' "Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair" are good examples of each singer's style.

Jean Ritchie grew up in a singing family. She tells us that all the members of the family sang at work, at play, when they danced or rocked the baby, when they felt gay or lonesome or reverential. She has told their story in *Singing Family of the Cumberland*s and put twenty-one of their songs into *The Swapping Song Book*, an excellent book for elementary and junior high schools. The musical arrangements are simple, with guitar chords added.

Richard Chase gives his own account of how he became a singer and collector of our native ballads. He tells about his chance visit to Pine Mountain Settlement School and says:

The school was assembled, waiting for a program to start, and without benefit of piano, some child's voice raised the first line and suddenly the whole room was filled with singing. It was "The Mary Golden Tree." The magic of the sorrowful tale, of the tune, of the "lone and lonesome" words made my hair stand on end. For thirty years this magic has held me.

So Richard Chase became an ardent collector of folk ballads and tales. Today, in true minstrel style, he travels from university to university, to summer sessions, workshops, and state meetings, charming teachers with the old play-party dances, the folk tales, and the ballads. There is a homespun humor about his presentations that has made folklore enthusiasts of many children as well as adults.

Jean Thomas, a Kentucky mountaineer now famous as the "Traipsin' Woman," is an author, lecturer, and founder of the American Folk Song Society. Her "singin' gatherin'" attracts thousands of visitors every June. Miss Thomas writes:

Today, even in the most remote sections of the Kentucky mountains, both old and young—though often unable to read and write (my own blood kin among them) can make up a ballad 'right out of their heads.' A poet-craft is theirs which not even the juggernaut of progress...can wipe out.<sup>1</sup>

She then gives a ballad about Sergeant Alvin York (World War I) composed by one of the mountaineers, Jilson Setters.

This type of heroic subject matter has always been dear to ballad makers and will probably continue to be so. World War II,

### Using the native ballads with children

In the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., you will find some 6000 records in the Archives of American Folk Song, including of course many ballads. The Lomax records are there and an infinite variety of others from all over this country, sung not by pro-

<sup>1</sup>Jean Thomas, "How Music Entered a Famous Feud," *The Trade* (February 1944), p. 126.

for example, yielded a ballad of remarkable dramatic power—"Rodger Young" by Frank Loesser. It celebrates the heroism of Rodger Young, who was an unusually small, bespectacled soldier with defective hearing. He was made sergeant and squad leader but was so fearful that his poor hearing might jeopardize his men in combat that he requested and was granted a demotion to private. On New Georgia Island in the South Pacific, although seriously wounded, he deliberately drew enemy machine-gun fire upon himself in order to divert it from his platoon, which was withdrawing to adjust its position. The other men escaped unharmed, but Young was killed. His deed is honored by a posthumous award of the Congressional Medal of Honor and by Frank Loesser's song. This stanza celebrates Young's heroism tersely and dramatically:

It was he who drew the fire of the enemy,  
That a company of men might live to fight,  
And before the deadly fire of the enemy  
Stood the man, stood the man we hail tonight.  
Stood the man, Rodger Young,  
Fought and died for the men he matched  
among.

Like the everlasting courage of the Infantry  
Was the courage of Private Rodger Young.

(Copyright 1945 by Bob Miller, Inc.)

Frank Loesser was already well known as a writer of popular songs, but in "Rodger Young" he has written a ballad as dramatic and as truly ballad in form and content as "Chevy Chase." So balladry goes on in every generation, sometimes humorous, often tragic, but invariably reflecting the particular times and people from which it springs.

professionals but by cowboys, sailors, Negroes, mountaineers, old women, and even children. Some of these records contain apparently recent and as yet unpublished material. It is the greatest collection of native ballads in existence and one that should be known and used. Groups of them have been assembled in albums for loan or for sale and might provide

a happy way of introducing children to ballad literature.

The Lomax and Sandburg volumes are admirably classified for school use. "Pioneer Memories," "Great Lakes and Erie Canal," "Mexican Border Songs," "Railroad and Work Gangs," "Cowboy Songs," "Sailors and Sea Fights," "Lumberjacks, Loggers, and Shanty-Boys" are some of their many classifications. It is obvious that these will correlate with United States history and with the study of types of work that children find most picturesque and fascinating.

One group<sup>1</sup> studying the Great Lakes and using *Paddle-to-the-Sea* (p. 483) as the literary focus of a geography unit became so interested in lake lore and accumulated such a rich mass of factual material that an assembly was, of course, inevitable. "Red Iron Ore," with its vigorous lilt and dramatic story of shipping on the Great Lakes, was exactly what they needed to make a lively interlude in their informative program. Here are six of its twelve verses given in *The American Songbag*:

#### RED IRON ORE

Come all you bold sailors that follow the Lakes  
On an iron ore vessel your living to make.  
I shipped in Chicago, bid adieu to the shore,  
Bound away to Escanaba for red iron ore.

Derry down, down, down derry down.

The wind from the south'ard sprang up a fresh breeze

And away through Lake Michigan the Roberts did sneeze.

Down through Lake Michigan the Roberts did roar,

And on Friday morning we passed through death's door.

Derry down, down, down derry down.

This packet she howled across the mouth of Green Bay,

And before her cutwater she dashed the white spray.

We rounded the sand point, our anchor let go,  
We furled in our canvas and the watch went below.

Derry down, down, down derry down.

Next morning we hove alongside the *Exile*,  
And soon was made fast to an iron ore pile,  
They lowered their chutes and like thunder did roar,

They spouted into us that red iron ore,  
Derry down, down, down derry down.

Some sailors took shovels while others got spades,

And some took wheelbarrows, each man to his trade,

We looked like red devils, our fingers got sore,  
We cursed Escanaba and damned iron ore.

Derry down, down, down derry down.

The tug *Escanaba* she towed out the *Minch*,  
The Roberts she thought she had left in a pinch,  
And as she passed by us she bid us good-bye,  
Saying, "We'll meet you in Cleveland next Fourth of July!"

Derry down, down, down derry down.

Another group<sup>2</sup> studying Westward expansion enjoyed the tall tales for their English work and some of the cowboy ballads for their music period. *Pecos Bill* created enough hilarity to last them for weeks, and so for their ballads they chose the contrasting melancholy of "Oh, Bury Me Not on the Lone Prairie," "As I Walked Out in the Streets of Laredo," and the two favorites, "A Home on the Range" and "Whoopee Ti Yi Yo, Git Along, Little Dogies." Other groups used records of the cowboy ballads, to the great delight of the children, who played them over and over until they had learned them. The Lomax section on "Breakdowns and Play Parties" might well be used in connection with study of the Daniel Boone, Davy Crockett, or Lincoln periods. All three men, the children like to remember, could dance at play-parties the whole night through.

So far, only those native ballads that are sung, or sung and danced, have been discussed. Our native ballads are more likely than the old English ballads to suffer if they are used apart from their characteristic melodies. The

<sup>1</sup>Benjamin Franklin School, Cleveland, Ohio. Principal, Miss Aleda Ranit, teacher, Miss Hulda Richardson.

<sup>2</sup>Caledonia School, East Cleveland. Principal, Miss Bertha Clendenin; teacher, Miss Ethel Hunter.

Negro spirituals or such a gentle, tender lyric as "Down in the Valley" have little significance without music. For these, the Lomax and Sandburg collections with their musical arrangements are invaluable.

There are a few story-ballads, however, that are delightful read aloud and may be used without music. Louise Pound's little book is a good source for these. She gives, for instance, the droll ballad of "My Father's Gray Mare," in which young Roger, courting the farmer's daughter Kate, became more interested in the mare than the girl. The farmer refused his suit and when fair Kate later encountered Roger she saucily recalled him as the man who "did once come a-courting my father's gray mare." "The Rich Young Farmer" is a much more satisfactory romance. (There is, by the way, something impersonal about these ballad love affairs that satisfies without embarrassing the adolescent who is interested in but self-conscious about romance.) "The Little Old Sod Shanty on the Claim" is interesting when read aloud. In the

Lomax *Cowboy Songs* there is an amusing burlesque on bad men called "The Desperado," which boys can read well. Or one boy can read the Desperado's lines while a verse choir does the chorus. Here is a sample of it:

#### THE DESPERADO

*I'm a howler from the prairies of the West.  
If you want to die with terror, look at me.  
I'm chain-lightning—if I ain't may I be blessed.  
I'm the snorter of the boundless prairie.*

*He's a killer and a hater!*

*He's the great annihilator!*

*He's the terror of the boundless prairie.*

These native ballads are rougher and cruder than most of the literature you will give children, but, for that very reason, provide a wholesome change from the delicacy of most poetry. There is no doubt that children like ballads, and boys especially take them to their hearts. No two will make the same choice of ballads, but exploring these sources with a group of children is in itself a satisfying experience.

### Modern narrative poems

The story-poem and the old ballad form have proved as attractive to poets as they have to readers. The list of poets who have enjoyed writing narrative poems is a long one and includes such distinguished names as Scott, Allingham, Southey, Browning, Tennyson, Longfellow, Whittier, Swinburne, Rossetti, Kipling, and Masfield. The majority of these ballads, however, belong to high school or even to college level. They are too long or the plots are too mature or the language too difficult for elementary school children to struggle with, even when the poems are read aloud. Fortunately, there still remains a small residue of narrative poetry for children that is not only suitable but provides them with the fun, the thrills, and the satisfaction which only a dramatic verse-story can give. In this section on modern narrative poetry, pure ballads and narrative verse are not distinguished, but these poems are discussed on

the basis of their primary appeal to children, which is their story interest.

#### Poems for children five to nine

For the youngest children, from five to eight or nine, there are two masterpieces whose popularity never wanes and whose charms every child should discover. We refer, of course, to "A Visit from St. Nicholas" by Clement Clarke Moore and "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" by Robert Browning.

In 1822, in the midst of the most moralistic and lugubrious period of children's literature, Christmas eve found a certain Mr. Clement Moore obliged to make a last-minute visit to the market. Darkness had come, sleigh bells jingled, snow crunched underfoot and, where the street lights fell upon it, sparkled and twinkled. Mr. Moore did his errand at the market, hurried home with his package, delivered it to his wife, and then hastened to



More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name.  
'Now, Dasher! Now, Dancer! Now, Prancer and Vixen!  
On, Comet! On, Cupid! On, Donner and Blitzen!  
To the top of the perch, to the top of the wall!  
Now, dash away, dash away, dash away, all!"

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky  
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew  
With the sleigh full of toys and Saint Nicholas too

Illustration by Everett Shinn for *The Night Before Christmas* by Clement Clark Moore, Winston, 1942 (original in color, book 8 x 10)

*The original of this picture appears in icy blues and white with accents of warm color on Santa and his toys. But even without color, the picture is exciting because of the pell-mell action of the wind-borne reindeer.*

his study where he shut the door and remained alone for several hours. When he rejoined his family, he brought with him "A Visit from St. Nicholas," which not only delighted his family but has been spellbinding children ever since.

"'Twas the night before Christmas," the children call it, and never recognize it by any other title. The three-, four-, and five-year-olds listen when you read it, chuckle, join in, and demand, "Read it again." The Santa Claus Mr. Moore gave to the world is a combination of an elfish Kris Kringle, the Dutch Saint Nicholas, and Mr. Moore's own exuberant imagination. His "Saint Nick" bounds and twinkles, winks, shakes with laughter, lays his finger "aside of his nose," whistles to his chargers, and appears and disappears with the speed of a hurricane. His reindeer team is no

impersonal collection of reindeer but a mad, tearing crew, each with a name and a personality—Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner, Blitzen. These names should trip off your tongue as readily as one, two, three. This Saint Nicholas with his reindeer has become the American Santa Claus. Clement Moore gave him a personality, a great dramatic rôle, a dreamlike existence all his own. The poem was not published until a year after it was written, but from 1823, no American Christmas which includes young children has been complete without it.

It is interesting to recall that Robert Browning wrote his "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" for the amusement of a sick child, with the special intention of supplying him with subject matter he could illustrate. Perhaps this accounts, in part, for the visual quality of the



Illustration by Hope Dunlap for *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* by Robert Browning, Rand McNally, 1910 (original in color, book 7½ x 10)

*Hope Dunlap's illustrations with their deep colors have the medieval quality of stained-glass windows. Her style is particularly well adapted to the legend of "The Pied Piper."*

Just because this poem carries some resounding, mouth-filling words, it has been relegated to the upper grades or high schools. Actually, its subject matter can be appreciated by the younger children of the fairy-tale age. Seven- and eight-year-old children should have a chance to hear it, pore over a good illustrated edition of it, and draw pictures for it themselves, or say parts of it if they wish to.

One little third-grade group<sup>1</sup> became so fond of it, they decided to do it with a verse choir. After a few trials they invited a fifth-grade boy to be the Mayor and another to be the Piper; then they carried the rest, which was the really staggering narrative. It was an ambitious undertaking, but those who heard it have never forgotten the young voices describing the tripping, skipping crowds of little children following the "wonderful music with shouting and laughter." It ended with one of the younger children speaking the lines of the little lame boy, left behind against his will, and concluding sorrowfully:

"To go now limping as before,  
And never hear of that country more!"

Of course, there are other narrative poems for young children, but "A Visit from St. Nicholas" and "The Pied Piper of Hamelin" are classics that they should know from hearing and from saying themselves.

For broad comedy Eugene Field's "The Duel" (the tale of "The gingham dog and the calico cat") and Laura Richards' "The Monkey and the Crocodile" are perennial

<sup>1</sup>Benjamin Franklin School, Cleveland; teacher, Miss Sackett.

poem, which endears it to illustrators young and old. The story of "The Piper" is too familiar to need reviewing, but particular qualities of the poem are worth noting. In the first place, the story moves rapidly. Words hurry and all but trip the reader's tongue; episodes follow each other swiftly; and lines have the racing tempo first of the scurrying rats and later of the skipping children. They slow down only for the pompous Mayor and his devious cogitations, and for the little lame boy's wistful account of being left behind. Some readers like to conclude with this episode, omitting the last two parts entirely. The dramatic conflict between greed and honor is sufficiently objective for children to understand, and they approve of the Piper's retributive revenge. Children usually dislike descriptions, but Part II, describing the destructiveness of rats, they roll under their tongues. Above all they like the mystery of the Piper himself. "Who was he? Was there ever such a person? Where did he take the children?" they wonder.

favorites. William Allingham's "The Fairy Shoemaker" and Laura Richards' "Little John Bottlejohn" (p. 113) are unusual fairy and mermaid poems, the latter simple enough for the five-year-olds. The sevens never tire of James Whitcomb Riley's "Little Orphant Annie," which is a rare mixture of scariness and nonsense, and they also like his "The Raggedy Man." Another story-poem with a wide appeal is Ruth Crawford Seeger's "Let's Build a Railroad." Six railroad work songs are connected by a cadenced narrative, with lively pictures by Tom Funk. The format suggests that the book is for children five to seven, but the text will have more meaning for ten- or twelve-year-olds. It would make a stirring class performance for an assembly, with solo voices and groups speaking or singing the narrative and the songs.

The eights will enjoy "The Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee" by Mildred Plew Meigs. The funny words and phrases tickle them: "squizzamaroo," "a floppety plume on his hat," "a parrot called Pepperkin Pye," "his boots made a slickery slosh," "crooked like a squash," and the dramatic "Oh jing! went the gold of Dowdee."

#### THE PIRATE DON DURK OF DOWDEE

Ho, for the Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee!  
He was as wicked as wicked could be,

But oh, he was perfectly gorgeous to see!  
The Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

His conscience, of course, was as black as a bat  
But he had a floppety plume on his hat  
And when he went walking it jiggled—like that!  
The plume of the Pirate Dowdee.

His coat it was crimson and cut with a slash,  
And often as ever he twirled his mustache  
Deep down in the ocean the mermaids went  
splash,

Because of Don Durk of Dowdee.

Moreover, Dowdee had a purple tattoo,  
And stuck in his belt where he buckled it  
through

Were a dagger, a dirk and a squizzamaroo,  
For fierce was the Pirate Dowdee.

So fearful he was he would shoot at a puff  
And always at sea when the weather grew rough  
He drank from a bottle and wrote on his cuff,  
Did Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

Oh, he had a cutlass that swung at his thigh,  
And he had a parrot called Pepperkin Pye,  
And a zigzaggy scar at the end of his eye  
Had Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

He kept in a cavern, this buccaneer bold,  
A curious chest that was covered with mould,  
And all of his pockets were jingy with gold!  
Oh jing! went the gold of Dowdee.

His conscience, of course, it was crooked like a  
squash  
But both of his boots made a slickery slosh,

Illustrations by children in the Cleve-  
land Public Schools

Notice the contrast in these  
two interpretations of  
"The Pirate Don Durk  
of Dowdee." One child has  
caught the farcical tone of  
the poem; the other has pictured  
the gay, gallant pirate as he  
sees himself. Hazel Dell and  
East Madison Schools.



And he went through the world with a wonderful swash,  
Did Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

It's true he was wicked as wicked could be,  
His sins they outnumbered a hundred and three  
But oh, he was perfectly gorgeous to see,  
The Pirate Don Durk of Dowdee.

In the same category of sheer nonsense is William Brighty Rands' poem about "Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore," the wretched boy who "never would shut a door."

#### GODFREY GORDON GUSTAVUS GORE

Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore—  
No doubt you have heard the name before—  
Was a boy who never would shut a door!

The wind might whistle, the wind might roar,  
And teeth be aching and throats be sore,  
But still he never would shut the door.

His father would beg, his mother implore,  
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,  
We really *do* wish you would shut the door!"

Their hands they wrung, their hair they tore;  
But Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore  
Was deaf as the buoy out at the Nore.

When he walked forth the folks would roar,  
"Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore,  
Why don't you think to shut the door?"

They rigged out a Shutter with sail and oar,  
And threatened to pack off Gustavus Gore  
On a voyage of penance to Singapore.

But he begged for mercy, and said, "No more!  
Pray do not send me to Singapore  
On a Shutter, and then I will shut the door!"

"You will?" said his parents; "then keep on shore!

But mind you do! For the plague is sore  
Of a fellow that never will shut the door,  
Godfrey Gordon Gustavus Gore!"

Vachel Lindsay's "The Potatoes' Dance" (p. 122) and Walter de la Mare's "The Lost Shoe" are unique tales children also enjoy. Search your anthologies and books of individual poets for more story-poems, because even the fives and sevens enjoy the sense of swift-

ness and suspense which the rhythmic flow of verse gives to a story.

#### Story-poems for older children

Older children will like many of the poems allotted to the younger ones. If, for instance, the twelves or fourteens have missed "The Pied Piper," give it to them now, by all means. Children in the middle grades like Longfellow's moving "The Wreck of the Hesperus." Also tragic, and of high poetic beauty, is Edna St. Vincent Millay's "The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver." This the twelves and fourteens should not miss. It is a fantasy, eerie and wistful, built around a mother's love and sacrifice for her child. A poem as full of pity and tenderness as this lovely ballad will help to balance the stark and often brutal tragedies to which children are exposed through our newspapers and magazines. Children need the therapy of laughter; they need also the therapy of compassionate tears.

Scott's "Young Lochinvar," a gay, swash-buckling romance with a galloping tempo, is particularly enjoyed by older children. Robert Southey's "The Inchcape Rock" tells a good pirate story, but unlike "Dowdee," it is a grim one. "Johnny Appleseed" by Stephen Vincent Benét and Rosemary Carr Benét is a simple and charming narrative. And let's not forget that gem of Americana, Ernest L. Thayer's "Casey at the Bat."

For the eleven- to fourteen-year-olds there are many story-poems about great events in American history. Certainly they should know "The Landing of the Pilgrim Fathers" by Felicia Dorothea Hemans, with its unforgettable picture of that desolate arrival and its significance in our history. Children should also thrill to the galloping hoofbeats of Longfellow's "Paul Revere's Ride" before they meet the more complex and workaday Revere of the biographies. The gallantry of old "Barbara Frietchie" defying Stonewall Jackson is good, too, provided the children have a biography of Jackson and learn to appreciate him for the rare human being he was. Texas children should not be the only ones to tingle





From R. Caldecott's Picture Book, Number One, Warne (original in color, book 7¼ x 8¾)

*In this illustration for "John Gilpin's Ride," we see Caldecott's flair for humorous action and storytelling details at its best. Grace and belter-skelter action have made his pictures forever entrancing to children and adults.*

with pride over "The Defense of the Alamo" as Joaquin Miller relates it. Arthur Guiterman has written a number of fine historical ballads, but especially recommended are his "Daniel Boone" and "The Oregon Trail." These are so significant, both as poems and as history, that they seem almost worthy of listing as essential poetry experiences for the older children. In the Benét's *A Book of Americans* (123), which, by the way, should be in every elementary school, there are many poems you will wish to use in connection with your history, but the pair, "Nancy Hanks" and "Abraham Lincoln," are the great favorites. The plaintive, wistful ghost of Nancy asking if anyone knows her son, "did he have fun, did he get on," is poignantly moving, while the concluding lines of the Lincoln poem remain in your mind to be thought about over and over:

*Lincoln was the green pine  
Lincoln kept on growing.*

These poems are typical of the fine narrative verse available for older children in connection with their United States history. Such poems can be introduced casually as the history chronology unfolds, or the children may become interested in the theme of heroism and start searching for hero poems of their own. Such a search will include other countries, of course. They will discover Browning's "An Incident of the French Camp," brief, sharp tragedy, full of youthful gallantry, or they may find Henry Newbolt's "Drake's Drum" with its eerie, haunting verse:

*"Take my drum to England, hand et by the  
shore,  
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;  
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port  
o' Heaven,  
An' drum them up the Channel as we  
drummed them long ago."*

After that they should discover Robert Nathan's "Dunkirk," a poem that tells the story

of two children who steered their little boat, along with other small craft, to bring the trapped soldiers home from that tragic beach. The return voyage with fourteen men finds the boy recalling the great English heroes of the sea, and the poem ends with the two lines:

*There at his side sat Francis Drake,  
And held him true and steered him home.*

How can people be fearful that we shall overglamorize history? The vision, the fortitude, and the selflessness of human beings can never be sufficiently celebrated. These put heart in youngsters, build their ideals, and help mold the temper of their minds and spirits. There cannot be too many such poems.

In addition to these historical ballads there are many other varieties of the modern story-poems for older children. "John Gilpin" is only one of many humorous ballads they enjoy. Undoubtedly, "The Highwayman" by Alfred Noyes is their favorite romance. Many a teacher, and parent too, has held eleven-, twelve-, and thirteen-year-olds entranced by reading aloud this thriller.

These modern story-poems run the whole gamut of subject matter even as the old ballads did—fairy lore, sheer nonsense, romance, tragedy, and heroic adventure—a wide range in content and appeal. Modern narrative poems should usually be read aloud to the children lest they be discouraged by the very length of them or by their reading diffi-

culties. Once they have heard them, many of the children will be able to read them for themselves with enjoyment and verve.

Ballads or narrative poems, whether old or new, belong to every period of childhood and add variety and zest to experiences with poetry. The four- and five-year-olds usually grow quiet and teary-eyed over "The Babes in the Wood," which is a very different response from the chantings and the chuckles with which they take their *Mother Goose*. The six- and seven-year-olds, who can listen only to the small lyrics of Christina Rossetti, the brief nonsense of A. A. Milne, and the short, simple verses of Robert Louis Stevenson, will suddenly concentrate with delight upon the long imaginative narrative of "Twas the night before Christmas" or "The Pied Piper of Hamelin." The eleven- and twelve-year-olds, hungry for adventure, beginning to savor romance, and loving violent action and practical jokes, are not satisfied with lyric poetry only, no matter how beautiful it may be. They like the horseplay of the farcical ballads and the vim and dash with which all ballads are told. Romance, adventure, and tragedy move swiftly in these story-poems and that is the way the older child would like to have life move. It is, then, a good thing to spice children's poetic offering at each age level by giving them a taste of the fine story-poems both ancient and modern.

## Verses in the gay tradition

6

Mother Goose's rhymes gave a vigorous start to the gay tradition of nonsense verse for children. Indeed most English-speaking people find a lifelong source of entertainment in humorous jingles, as the popularity of the limerick with both children and adults testifies. While nonsense verses may not represent the highest level of poetry, they do serve some useful ends in the child's personal and literary development.

### Values of nonsense verse

#### Release from tensions

It is good for us to laugh. Someone has said that a teacher should count the day lost when her children have not, at one time or another, thrown back their heads and laughed spontaneously and heartily. This unknown philosopher should have added that teachers and parents need this release also; for a hearty laugh provides just that—a release from all the miserable little tensions that have gradually crept up on us and tied us in hard knots. We say that we are "weak with laughter," which means that our knots are untied, we are relaxed and at ease once more. If nonsense verse can provide such a release, blessed be nonsense!

Of course, not all people or ages are amused by the same jokes. Two-year-olds may chuckle over the hissing *s*'s of "sing a song of sixpence." The hilarity of older children is roused by other forms of humor. Just listen to seven-year-olds enjoying Laura Richards' "Eletelephony" for the first time, or to ten-



There was an Old Man on  
whose nose  
Most birds of the  
air could repose;  
But they all flew away at the closing of day,  
Which relieved that Old Man and his nose.

From Edward Lear's *The Complete Nonsense Book*,  
Dodd, 1946 (book 6 x 9)

*There is a nonbalance about Lear's  
cartoons that matches the rhymes. A Lear  
limerick without the Lear drawing is only  
half as funny as the two together.*

year-olds catching on to the outrageous surprises of the limericks. And try reading the traditional "Whistle, Whistle" to the twelve-year-olds:

#### WHISTLE, WHISTLE

"Whistle, whistle, old wife, and you'll get a hen."

"I wouldn't whistle," said the wife, "if you could give me ten!"

"Whistle, whistle, old wife, and you'll get a cock."

"I wouldn't whistle," said the wife, "if you gave me a flock!"

"Whistle, whistle, old wife, and you'll get a coo."

"I wouldn't whistle," said the wife, "if you could give me two!"

"Whistle, whistle, old wife, and you'll get a gowen."

"I wouldn't whistle," said the wife, "for the best one in the town!"

"Whistle, whistle, old wife, and you'll get a man."

"Wheuple, whauple," said the wife, "I'll whistle if I can!"

That ending usually surprises the adolescent into sudden chuckles. For all ages, then, the therapeutic value of laughter should keep us searching for the occasional nonsense verse that relieves the boredom and the tensions of everyday life and tickles us into an easier and more comfortable frame of mind.

#### Relief from reason

Moreover, the grotesque and the incongruous, which make up the content of nonsense verse, provide needed escape from the weight of the realistic and the reasonable. Two and two are four, but wouldn't it be glorious if, once in a while, our miserable two and two should turn out to be a dazzling four hundred and forty-four? How discomfited the arithmetic teacher would be! Nonsense verse turns the trick. "The Jumbies" go to sea in a sieve and have a successful voyage instead of being properly drowned for their folly. The cow jumps over

the moon and apparently her milk doesn't even curdle. The world of nonsense is a gay, exuberant world of irresponsible behavior and impossible results. Adults as well as children find solace in this world when life gets too heavy-handed with cause and effect, too heavy-footed with walking the straight and narrow path, too heavy-hearted with taboos and just punishments. Nonsense provides an innocent and refreshing escape from ingrown gravity.

#### Good ear-training

Humorous verse, if it is skillfully composed, introduces the child to rhyme, rhythm, and meter and to various types of verse patterns. Of course, clumsy doggerel is unbearable, and there is no excuse for using it since English verse includes more clever nonsense than we can possibly read. On the other hand, the neatly turned limerick and the patter of humorous couplets or quatrains in exact meter train the ear to enjoy the sound of words and rhythms, a training that should carry over to catching similar sounds in poetry of a higher order.

To be sure, the patter-rhymes of nonsense verse sometimes start the child on a rhyming orgy of his own. He may get the idea that mere rhyming makes a poem and his flood of

I see  
A tree  
Hee, hee!

may be hard to bear, but it will wear off in time and can be rather easily counteracted by the impact of a different type of verse. Meanwhile, the ear-training that a child gets from his wholehearted enjoyment of deft nonsense verse is not to be despised.

#### Bait to better poetry

Sometimes children's first experience with poetry is made painful for them. The pedantic habit of reading a poem to a child and then catechizing him about its meaning, or worse still about its effect on him, may make him miserably suspicious of anything that rhymes.

Giving children poetry that is beyond their level of understanding and appreciation will also create a distaste for it. Adult moods of sorrow, resignation, and self-pity are not moods for the child. Nor can many children enjoy long poems about nature and landscapes. "Tears, idle tears" or lyrical ejaculations about a violet are poetry experiences that will send the average child scurrying to the solace of the comic strip. If you find a child whose experiences have made him suspicious of poetry, then start with some "funny" verses and watch him unbend.

One small boy admitted that he liked all kinds of books except books of poetry. The other boys in his group agreed with him. The consensus was that poetry is always "kind-a queer." They had other words for it, too,

## Four poets of nonsense verse

**Edward Lear, 1812-1888**

*The Book of Nonsense*  
*Nonsense Songs and Stories*

After *Mother Goose*, Edward Lear is chronologically the first poet with which to conjure laughter. From the time *The Book of Nonsense* appeared in 1846, children and adults have been chuckling over Lear's limericks and Lear's nonsense verse-stories. If you glance at a chronology of poets who have contributed to the verse children enjoy, you will discover before Lear the hymns and moralistic maxims of Dr. Isaac Watts, followed by the lyrics of William Blake and the gentle moralizing of Ann and Jane Taylor, but no jokes, no hilarity anywhere.

In England, about 1820, several small books of limericks appeared, the first of which, *Anecdotes and Adventures of Fifteen Gentlemen*, Lear probably read, because in his introduction to *More Nonsense* he writes:

Long years ago, in days when much of my time was passed in a country house where children and mirth abounded, the lines beginning "There was an old man of Tobago" were suggested to me by a valued friend as a form of verse lending itself to limitless variety for

words that ran the gamut of their slang expressions for "crazy." With these boys the wise adult tried some humorous poems and promptly won their surprised attention and approval. After they had laughed, they admitted that funny poems weren't so bad. By the time their funny poems had progressed from the broadly nonsensical to the somewhat more clever type of humor, their suspicions were broken down, and after some stirring narrative poems, they were ready to go further. In short, humorous verse is good introductory material to rouse interest in poetry and to allay the suspicion that poetry is high-brow and peculiar. Nonsense verse is easy to listen to and easy to repeat. Begin with humorous verse or downright nonsense, and you'll have the children with you.

rhymes and pictures; and thenceforth the greater part of the original drawings and verses for the first *Book of Nonsense* were struck off with a pen, no assistance ever having been given me in any way but that of uproarious delight and welcome at the appearance of every new absurdity.

There was an Old Man of Tobago,  
Lived long on rice gruel and sago;  
But at last, to his bliss,  
The physician said this—  
To a roast leg of mutton you may go.

These were the lines that set a serious young artist to writing some of the most famous nonsense in the English language and illustrating it with sketches so amusing that a Lear limerick without the Lear drawing is only half as funny as the two together. There were also peculiarities in Lear's own life and personality that gave impetus to his flair for writing and drawing sheer nonsense. Older children, to whom most of Lear's verse belongs, will enjoy knowing something about him.

Edward Lear was one of twenty-one children, most of whom died in childhood or

early youth. He was a pale, sickly child beset by an illness that he referred to all his life as the "Terrible Demon," a mild form of epilepsy. While he never allowed his illness to prevent him from doing anything he wished to do, we can readily imagine that it served as a stimulus to all sorts of activities that would help him forget it. As a little boy, Lear knew the security of wealth. Then at thirteen he suffered the shock of seeing house, footmen, twelve carriages, and all the other luxuries disappear as if by magic. His father was imprisoned for debt and his mother plunged into poverty and anxiety. Eventually all the debts were paid, but by that time the family had scattered: the boys had left England, several of the girls had died, and the others had married except Lear's beloved Ann. This sister, twenty-one years older than Edward, raised the delicate little boy from the time he was a baby. He was more like her son than little brother, and when misfortune came to the family, Ann took Edward as her special responsibility and shared with him the small legacy that provided her with a modest living.

Ann wisely taught Edward at home. With his bad vision and the handicap of the "Terrible Demon," the child would have suffered acutely in the usual school situation. At home he was a cheerful, lively child with unusual skill in drawing. By fifteen he was beginning to earn money with his sketching. When he was in London he made scientific drawings for doctors, and when he was in the country he perfected his technique of drawing birds, butterflies, and flowers in the most minute detail. It was this latter skill that brought him an appointment to make drawings of the parrots at the zoo in Regent's Park. From the time of the publication of the book on parrots, with Lear's large colored drawings, his reputation as an artist was established. He did another large volume, *Tortoises, Terrapins and Turtles*, but it was while he was at work on the parrots that the Earl of Derby discovered him and invited the young artist to come down to his country estate and make drawings of the collection of birds and animals

living there. This was the beginning of a lifelong friendship with this distinguished family. Indeed Lear was actually employed by four Earls of Derby. During his stay with this family the nonsense verses began, and Lear the artist became Lear the humorist.

Lear himself gives us a clue to this change. He sometimes grew a little tired of the formal gatherings to which he was subjected in the Earl's household, and he wrote to a friend, "The uniform apathetic tone assumed by lofty society irks me dreadfully; nothing I long for half so much as to giggle heartily and to hop on one leg down the great gallery—but I dare not." So instead of giggling and hopping on one leg Lear evidently took refuge with the innumerable grandchildren of the Earl. They adored him, and the Earl presently discovered that all the children on the place followed this serious-looking but irrepressibly gay young artist as if he were the Pied Piper. It was to these children that Lear must have shown his limericks as he produced them, words and sketches, hilarious wholes. The publication of that first *Book of Nonsense* set the whole world to laughing and trying its hand at limericks. For Lear himself, writing them must have been great fun. It was a rest from those painstakingly detailed scientific drawings; it was a safe release for the high spirits and childlike mischief of the man who wanted to hop on one leg through the halls of the great; and, above all, it must have been a blessed escape from the illness which pursued but never conquered him.

The first book, published in 1846, contained only limericks, and these became so famous it is sometimes erroneously assumed that Lear invented the form. He did not invent the limerick, but he certainly became a master of its neat form and surprising content. Lear's limericks seem just as funny to us today as they did to his generation.

#### Narrative poems

The second book, *Nonsense Songs and Stories*, published in 1871, includes a variety of humorous verses, especially the pseudo-serious

narrative poems that seem all the funnier because they are gravely told. Every generation of five- and six-year-olds delights in

### THE OWL AND THE PUSSY-CAT

The Owl and the Pussy-Cat went to sea  
In a beautiful pea-green boat;  
They took some honey, and plenty of money,  
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.  
The Owl looked up to the stars above,  
And sang to a small guitar,  
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,  
What a beautiful Pussy you are,  
You are,  
You are!  
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

Pussy said to the Owl, "You elegant fowl!  
How charmingly sweet you sing!  
Oh! let us be married! too long we have tarried:  
But what shall we do for a ring?"  
They sailed away for a year and a day,  
To the land where the Bong-tree grows,  
And there in a wood a Piggy-wig stood,  
With a ring at the end of his nose,  
His nose,  
His nose,  
With a ring at the end of his nose.

"Dear Pig, are you willing to sell for one shilling  
Your ring?" Said the Piggy, "I will."  
So they took it away, and were married next day  
By the Turkey who lives on the hill.  
They dined on mince, and slices of quince,  
Which they ate with a runcible spoon;  
And hand in hand, on the edge of the sand,  
They danced by the light of the moon,  
The moon,  
The moon,  
They danced by the light of the moon.

Older boys and girls like the reasonable daftness of

### THE JUMBLES

They went to sea in a Sieve, they did,  
In a Sieve they went to sea;  
In spite of all their friends could say,

On a winter's morn, on a stormy day,

In a Sieve they went to sea!  
And when the Sieve turned round and round,  
And every one cried, "You'll all be drowned!"  
They called aloud, "Our Sieve ain't big,  
But we don't care a button! we don't care a fig!  
In a Sieve we'll go to sea!"

Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumbles live;  
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue;  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed away in a Sieve, they did,  
In a Sieve they sailed so fast,  
With only a beautiful pea-green veil  
Tied with a ribbon by way of a sail,  
To a small tobacco-pipe mast;  
And every one said, who saw them go,  
"O won't they be soon upset, you know!  
For the sky is dark, and the voyage is long.  
And, happen what may, it's extremely wrong  
In a Sieve to sail so fast!"

Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumbles live;  
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue;  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

They sailed to the Western Sea, they did,  
To a land all covered with trees,  
And they bought an Owl, and a useful Cart,  
And a pound of Rice, and a Cranberry Tart,  
And a hive of silvery Bees;  
And they bought a Pig, and some green Jackdaws,  
And a lovely Monkey with lollipop paws,  
And forty bottles of Ring-Bo-Ree,  
And no end of Stilton Cheese.  
Far and few, far and few,  
Are the lands where the Jumbles live;  
Their heads are green, and their hands are blue;  
And they went to sea in a Sieve.

And in twenty years they all came back,  
In twenty years or more;  
And every one said, "How tall they've grown!  
For they've been to the Lakes, and the Terrible Zone,  
And the hills of the Chunkly Bore";  
And they drank their health, and gave them a feast

<sup>1</sup>The third and fourth stanzas are omitted.

Of dumplings made of beautiful yeast;  
 And every one said, "If we only live,  
 We too will go to sea in a Sieve,—  
 To the hills of the Chankly Bore!"  
 Far and few, far and few,  
 Are the lands where the Jumbles live;  
 Their heads are green, and their hands are  
 blue;  
 And they went to sea in a Sieve.

Of course, the reason we like this wild crew is that we are sure we, too, have known Jumbles who set off to sea in a sieve and then triumphantly came home to look down their noses at all their cautious friends who never trusted sieves. The success story of the Jumbles is a good example of the humor Lear achieves by setting forth in ridiculous form some of life's unmoral surprises—the idle and foolish who make good. Like most of Lear's narrative jingles, it seems overlong. It is probably just as well to omit the third and fourth verses when reading it to children.

The dialogue poem between the duck and the kangaroo, together with Lear's drawings, is popular with children anywhere from six years old to sixteen. It does not suffer from excessive length as many of his narrative jingles do, and, when read with mock gravity, is characteristic Lear nonsense, merrily imagined and deftly written.

#### THE DUCK AND THE KANGAROO

Said the Duck to the Kangaroo,  
 "Good gracious! how you hop!  
 Over the fields, and the water too,  
 As if you never would stop!  
 My life is a bore in this nasty pond,  
 And I long to go out in the world beyond!  
 I wish I could hop like you!"  
 Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.  
 "Please give me a ride on your back!"  
 Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.  
 "I would sit quite still, and say nothing but  
 'Quack,'  
 The whole of the long day through!  
 And we'd go to the Dee, and the Jelly Bo Lee,  
 Over the land, and over the sea,—  
 Please take me a ride! O do!"  
 Said the Duck to the Kangaroo.

Said the Kangaroo to the Duck,  
 "This requires some little reflection;  
 Perhaps on the whole it might bring me luck;  
 And there seems but one objection,  
 Which is, if you'll let me speak so bold,  
 Your feet are unpleasantly wet and cold,  
 And would probably give me the 100—  
 Matizi!" said the Kangaroo.

Said the Duck, "As I sate on the rocks,  
 I have thought over that completely,  
 And I bought four pairs of worsted socks,  
 Which fit my web-feet neatly;  
 And to keep out the cold I've bought a cloak,  
 And every day a cigar I'll smoke,  
 All to follow my own dear true  
 Love of a Kangaroo!"

Said the Kangaroo, "I'm ready!  
 All in the moonlight pale;  
 But to balance me well, dear Duck, sit steady!  
 And quite at the end of my tail."  
 So away they went with a hop and a bound,  
 And they hopped the whole world three times  
 round;  
 And who so happy,—O who,  
 As the Duck and the Kangaroo?

#### Made-up words

Lear's use of made-up words is one of the most obvious sources of amusement in these jingles. You find the Pobble who has no toes, the Quangle Wangle with the beaver hat, and the amorous Yonghy-Bonghy Bò. There's a Crum-petty Tree and a Dong with a Luminous Nose, and in the Terrible Zone you can get bottles of ring-bo-ree. Altogether, Lear enlivens his nonsense country with the most delightful tongue-twisters and ear-ticklers to be found anywhere. The children revel in them once they hear them. His five different sets of alphabet rhymes are mostly of this alliterative, tongue-twister variety, and, of the five, none is better than the one that begins

A was once an apple-pie,  
 Pidy,  
 Widy,  
 Tidy,  
 Pidy,  
 Nice insidy,  
 Apple-piel



B was once a little bear,  
 Bcary,  
 Wary,  
 Hairy,  
 Beary,  
 Taky cary,  
 Little bearl

C was once a little cake,  
 Caky,  
 Baky,  
 Maky,  
 Caky,  
 Taky caky,  
 Little cakel

D was once a little doll,  
 Dolly,  
 Molly,  
 Polly,  
 Nolly,  
 Nursy dolly,  
 Little dolll

### Singing quality

Lear is an excellent craftsman. His meters are exact, his rhymes neat and musical, and his verse has a pleasant sound even at its wildest. Much of it is decidedly melodious. Undoubtedly part of the appeal of "The Owl and the Pussy-Cat" for young children is the melody of it. They chant it happily; they linger over the refrains:

They danced by the light of the moon,  
 The moon,  
 The moon,  
 They danced by the light of the moon.

So the older children like the sound of such a verse as the third one from "The Courtship of the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò":

"Lady Jingly! Lady Jingly!  
 Sitting where the pumpkins blow,  
 Will you come and be my wife?"  
 Said the Yonghy Bonghy-Bò.  
 "I am tired of living singly,—  
 On this coast so wild and shingly,—  
 I'm a-weary of my life,  
 If you'll come and be my wife,  
 Quite serene would be my life!"—  
 Said the Yonghy Bonghy Bò  
 Said the Yonghy-Bonghy-Bò.

Many of these poems have a singing quality that some modern verse writers may well envy.

### Lear's caricatures

Children like the ridiculous and eccentric characters in these verses and are especially entertained by the mad crew that populates the limericks.

There was an Old Man with a beard,  
 Who said, "It is just as I feared!—  
 Two Owls and a Hen,  
 Four Larks and a Wren,  
 Have all built their nests in my beard!"

There was an Old Man in a tree,  
 Who was horribly bored by a Bee;  
 When they said, "Does it buzz?"  
 He replied, "Yes, it does!  
 It's a regular brute of a bee!"

There was a Young Lady of Norway,  
 Who casually sat in a doorway;  
 When the door squeezed her flat,  
 She exclaimed, "What of that?"  
 This courageous Young Lady of Norway.

Over and over Edward Lear caricatured himself with words and with sketches which must have convulsed his friends, both juvenile and adult. In a note protesting his inability to keep an engagement because, "Disgustical to say," he had a cold in his head, he added these words with an accompanying picture:

I have sent for 2 large tablecloths to blow my nose on, having already used up all my handkerchiefs. And altogether I am so unfit for company that I propose getting into a bag and being hung up to a bough of a tree till this tyranny is overpast.<sup>1</sup>

Another portrait of himself dancing, together with the poem beginning "How pleasant to know Mr. Lear!" might be a good way of introducing Lear to children.

Older children may be amused to learn that Lear had trouble in establishing the authorship of his own verses. Perhaps because he was an artist, well-known for his scientific

<sup>1</sup>The Complete Nonsense Book, pp. 13-14.

sketches and later for his landscapes, and perhaps also because of his long association with the well-known Earl of Derby, the authorship of the verses was ascribed to the Earl, somewhat to Lear's annoyance. Lear himself tells about a conversation he overheard in a railway carriage, when a gentleman assured his fellow travelers that *The Book of Nonsense* was written by the Earl of Derby, whose name was Edward, and that *Lear* was merely *Earl* spelled backwards. A lady protested that she knew someone who knew Mr. Lear, but the positive gentleman knew better. There was no such person as Edward Lear. Whereupon Lear, according to his own account, arose armed with hat, handkerchief, and stick, all marked with his name, and with letters similarly addressed and "flashing all these articles at once on my would-be extinguisher's attention, I speedily reduced him to silence." His cartoons of himself must have served as the final proofs, for they are unmistakable.

After Lear, nonsense verse and humorous poems for children are more frequent. Rhymes are written to entertain rather than to instruct, and almost every writer of verse for children includes some nonsense in his offering.

### Lewis Carroll, 1832-1898

*Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*  
Through the Looking-Glass

In 1865 the world was astonished and delighted with a book called *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by one Lewis Carroll. The world was further astonished to discover that Lewis Carroll was none other than Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, an Oxford don and mathematician who had stepped out of his academic rôle to write a book for children. Moreover, it was several degrees wilder than Lear's books at their wildest. There was the Duchess with her amazing advice:

"Speak roughly to your little boy,  
And beat him when he sneezes;  
He only does it to annoy,  
Because he knows it teases."

CHORUS

"Wow! wow! wow!"

There was the gibberish poem, "Jabberwocky," which Alice found in the looking-glass book. Even Alice found it "rather hard to understand."

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves  
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;  
All mimsy were the borogoves,  
And the mome raths outgrabe.

"Beware the Jabberwock, my son!  
The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!  
Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun  
The frumious Bandersnatch!"

There were "You are old, Father William," "How doth the little crocodile," and a flock of other nonsense verses interspersed throughout the prose of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and later *Through the Looking-Glass*. To quote them is a temptation, but the fact is these rhymes are so much funnier in their prose setting than they are apart from it, that it seems a pity to lift them out of their context. For this reason, Lewis Carroll will be considered later in this book (p. 320), not merely as a writer of humorous verse for children, but as the author of one of the greatest fanciful stories ever written. The full flavor of his humor is in most cases best appreciated by boys and girls in their teens rather than by younger children, as perhaps the text of "Father William," which follows, will serve to illustrate:

"You are old, Father William," the young man said,  
"And your hair has become very white;  
And yet you incessantly stand on your head—  
Do you think, at your age, it is right?"

"In my youth," Father William replied to his son,  
"I feared it might injure the brain;  
But, now that I'm perfectly sure I have none,  
Why, I do it again and again."

"You are old," said the youth, "as I mentioned before,  
And have grown most uncommonly fat;  
Yet you turned a back somersault in at the door—  
Pray, what is the reason of that?"

"In my youth," said the sage, as he shook his grey locks,

"I kept all my limbs very supple  
By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box—

Allow me to sell you a couple?"

"You are old," said the youth, "and your jaws are too weak

For anything tougher than suet;  
Yet you finished the goose, with the bones and the beak—

Pray, how did you manage to do it?"

"In my youth," said his father, "I took to the law,

And argued each case with my wife;  
And the muscular strength, which it gave to my jaw,

Has lasted the rest of my life."

"You are old," said the youth, "one would hardly suppose

That your eye was as steady as ever;  
Yet you balanced an eel on the end of your nose—

What made you so awfully clever?"

"I have answered three questions, and that is enough,"

Said his father. "Don't give yourself airs!  
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?  
Be off, or I'll kick you down-stairs!"

Certainly Carroll gave the "gay nineties" a good start on their gaiety. It was further helped along by the operas of Gilbert and Sullivan, operas whose lyrics were chanted by adults from England to America, and were even taken over by the children. The satiric conversation in *H.M.S. Pinafore* between the boastful Captain, the "Ruler of the King's Navee" and the skeptical chorus has become a byword for all boasters.

Captain For I'm never, never sick at sea!

Chorus What, never?

Captain No, never.

Chorus What, never?

Captain Well,—hardly ever!

So sang the adults of the nineties and the children, too. Then along came Laura E. Rich-

ards, who is known as the children's American Poet Laureate of Nonsense.

### Laura E. Richards, 1850-1943

Tirra Tirra; Rhymes Old and New

Mrs. Richards came from an American home of unusual distinction and in turn added her unique contribution to its distinction. Her father was Samuel Gridley Howe, who devoted himself to such diverse social causes as the Greek War for Independence, the education of the blind, and the founding of the first school for feeble-minded children. Her mother, the beautiful and gifted Julia Ward Howe, author of "The Battle Hymn of the Republic," was not only a poet but an excellent musician who "knew all the songs in the world," or so her children thought. Mrs. Howe sang to them in three languages, and she made a special song for each child.

Laura grew up with her brother and three sisters in a house called Green Peace. The children shared the family heritage of music, poetry, and wide interests, together with the companionship of happy, intelligent adults. It is not surprising that the children in turn scribbled stories and poetry and were bubbling over with ideas and fun. It was not, however, until after she was married and living once more in Green Peace with her own children that Laura thought much about writing. Then, remembering her own delight in her mother's songs, she, too, began to sing to her children. First she sang the old ballads she knew so well. Then she found herself making up her own ditties, just as her mother had, probably because she could adapt them to the special demands of the particular child in her lap or at her knee. In her book, *Stepping Westward*, she tells about these songs. In the four years that saw the birth of her first three children (there were seven in all), she writes that she enjoyed

... contemporary with these births, the acquisition of my hurdy-gurdy . . . I had always rhymed easily; now . . . came a prodigious welling up of rhymes, mostly bringing their tunes

(or what passed for tunes; the baby, bless it, knew no better!) with them. I wrote, and sang, and wrote, and could not stop. The first baby was plump and placid, with a broad, smooth back which made an excellent writing desk. She lay on her front, across my lap; I wrote on her back, the writing pad quite as steady as the writing of jingles required.

No wonder these "jingles" of Laura Richards have a spontaneity and freshness that is only equaled by their lyric quality. Nor are we surprised to find that at eighty-one her "hurdy-gurdy" was still turning furiously, reeling out as delightful ditties for the third generation of babies as for the first.

It was Mrs. Richards' husband who suggested that she send some of her verses to the new magazine for children, *St. Nicholas*, and this she did. From then on, stories and poems came from her flying pen at an amazing rate. There was the long series known as the *Hildegard* books, which were tremendously popular with an earlier generation. They dealt with the transformation of the disagreeable, discontented Hildegard into a happy, thoughtful child with many friends. This theme is still used by modern writers, but the *Hildegard* stories are somewhat dated, and a bit too obviously moralistic. *Captain January* told the story of a baby rescued from the sea and raised by a good old lighthouse keeper. Mrs. Richards' biographies are still considered excellent and include such appealing heroines as *Elizabeth Fry*, *Florence Nightingale*, and *Joan of Arc*. Between stories and biographies, the verses continued to "bubble up" with undiminished charm. Finally, in 1931 when Mrs. Richards was eighty-one years old, May Lamberton Becker, then the "Readers' Guide" of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, received a request from a college professor for some lines he could not recall from Laura Richards' "A Legend of Lake Okeefinokee." This started such a burst of requests for these old rhymes and such an exchange of enthusiasms for special favorites, that a book of Laura E. Richards' verses, called *Tirra Lirra; Rhymes Old and New*, was published in

1932 with an enthusiastic foreword by the chief Richards-admirer of them all, May Lamberton Becker. And now, after the book had been out of print for several years, a new edition has been published, revived by popular demand, for these jingles are ageless. Once enjoyed, they are remembered. It is a book no home or school or library should be without, for Laura Richards serves laughter in a unique way.

### Funny words

Of course, she uses funny words. If Lear gave us "meloobious" and "terrible," and Carroll presented us with "galumphing," "beamish," "frabjious," and "whiffing," Mrs. Richards matches them with "Muffin Bird," "Rummy-jums," "bogoathybogs," "Lolloping Lizard," "a Glimmering Glog," and those remarkable museum specimens, "Wiggledywasticums," and "Proodlecumtumdsyl." Moreover, no one can play with words with more joyous confusion than she. Children from five to any ripe old age chuckle over

### ELETELEPHONY

Once there was an elephant,  
Who tried to use the telephante--  
No! no! I mean an elephone  
Who tried to use the telephone--  
(Dear me! I am not certain quite  
That even now I've got it right.)

Howe'er it was, he got his trunk  
Entangled in the telephunk;  
The more he tried to get it free,  
The louder buzzed the telephee--  
(I fear I'd better drop the song  
Of elephop and telephong!)

"Some Fishy Nonsense," "Dog-gerel," "The Poor Unfortunate Hottentot," and "Sir Ring-leby Rose" are only a few of the jingles that depend for their fun upon this juggling with words.

### Verse stories

Mrs. Richards carries her fun beyond mere play with words. She has also, in addition to the versemaker's skill, the dramatic art of a

first-rate storyteller. The gentle tale of "Little John Bottlejohn," lured away by a cajoling mermaid; the gory record of "The Seven Little Tigers and the Aged Cook"; the exciting "The Monkeys and the Crocodile"—these and a dozen others depend for their interest upon the skillful storytelling of the author as well as upon her irrepressible sense of the absurd. Here is the melodious "Little John Bottlejohn" to serve as an example:

### LITTLE JOHN BOTTLEJOHN

Little John Bottlejohn lived on the hill,  
And a blithe little man was he.  
And he won the heart of a pretty mermaid  
Who lived in the deep blue sea.  
And every evening she used to sit  
And sing on the rocks by the sea,  
"Oh! little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Won't you come out to me?"

Little John Bottlejohn heard her song,  
And he opened his little door.  
And he hopped and he skipped, and he skipped  
and he hopped,  
Until he came down to the shore.  
And there on the rocks sat the little mermaid,  
And still she was singing so free,  
"Oh! little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Won't you come out to me?"

Little John Bottlejohn made a bow,  
And the mermaid, she made one too;  
And she said, "Oh! I never saw any one half  
So perfectly sweet as you!  
In my lovely home 'neath the ocean foam,  
How happy we both might be!  
Oh! little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Won't you come down with me?"

Little John Bottlejohn said, "Oh yest  
I'll willingly go with you.  
And I never shall quail at the sight of your tail,  
For perhaps I may grow one too."  
So he took her hand, and he left the land,  
And plunged in the foaming main  
And little John Bottlejohn, pretty John Bottlejohn,  
Never was seen again.



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Illustration by Marguerite Davis for *Terra Lutra* by Laura E. Richards, Little, Brown, 1934 (book 4½ x 7¼)

*The tigers may look ferocious and the cook look like a specter, but the artist, Marguerite Davis, cleverly provides a clue to the surprise ending of this poem. See also page 146.*

She tells her tales with a convincing air of reality that heightens their humor. It is the perception of the unexpected and incongruous that invariably provokes laughter—hence the humor in the sudden juxtaposition of the real and the impossible. Little John Bottlejohn, for instance, seems to be a real person. He lives on a hill, he is a blithe little man, he hops and skips down his hill, he is a mannerly person with his courteous bow, but alas! he *will* talk to mermaids! The aged cook, who cooks for the seven little tigers, seems to be a harmless, mild old thing, and we are therefore doubly amazed when he hauls out his

knife and offs the head of the tiger who intended to do the same for him. "My Uncle Jehoshaphat," who had a swimming race with his piggywig and divided the prize, might indeed be "my" uncle, so plausible he seems.

### Funny characters

Mrs. Richards also deals with funny characters and funny situations. How the children chuckle over

MRS. SNIPKIN AND MRS. WOBBLECHIN

Skinny Mrs. Snipkin,  
With her little pipkin,  
Sat by the fireside a warming of her toes.  
Fat Mrs. Wobblechin,  
With her little doublechin,  
Sat by the window a-cooling of her nose.  
Says this one to that one,  
"Oh! you silly fat one,  
Will you shut the window down? You're freezing me to death!"  
Says that one to t'other one,  
"Good gracious, how you bother one!  
There isn't air enough for me to draw my precious breath!"

Skinny Mrs. Snipkin,  
Took her little pipkin,  
Threw it straight across the room as hard as she could throw;

Hit Mrs. Wobblechin  
On her little doublechin,  
And out of the window a tumble she did go.

And little children, even four- and five-year-olds, feel superior when they giggle understandingly over the blunders of

JIPPY AND JIMMY

Jippy and Jimmy were two little dogs.  
They went to sail on some floating logs;  
The logs rolled over, the dogs rolled in,  
And they got very wet, for their clothes were thin.

Jippy and Jimmy crept out again.  
They said, "The river is full of rain!"  
They said, "The water is far from dry!"  
Ki hi! ki hi! ki hi! ki hi!

Jippy and Jimmy went shivering home.  
They said, "On the river no more we'll roam;

And we won't go to sail until we learn how,  
Bow-wow! bow-wow! bow-wow-wow! bow-wow!"

The older children who know Kipling's "yellow dog Dingo" appreciate the ridiculous plight of "Bingo the Dingo," who fell in love with the "fatally fair flamingo." *Tirra Litra* is full of funny situations that are laugh provoking in themselves, with or without the funny words.

### Lyrical quality

Mrs. Richards, who wrote first for her own babies and lived to dedicate *Tirra Litra* to her youngest grandchild and her eldest great-grandchild, has caught in her verses some of the singing quality of words that children love. For example, read these lines from "A Song for Hal":

For every little wave has its nightcap on,  
Its nightcap, white cap, nightcap on,  
For every little wave has its nightcap on,  
So very, very early in the morning.

"A Legend of Lake Okeefinokee," "Little John Bottlejohn," "The Song of the Corn-Popper," "Talents Differ," "Will-o'-the-Wisp," and "Prince Tatters" are lyrics that almost sing themselves. Indeed, small children say "Sing it again!" when you read the chorus of "The Umbrella Brigade":

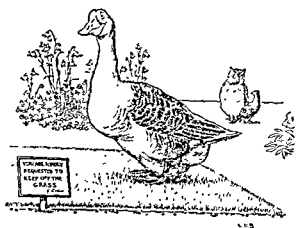
But let it rain,  
Tree-toads and frogs,  
Muslets and pitchforks,  
Kittens and dogs!  
Dash away! dash away!  
Who is afraid?  
Here we go,  
The Umbrella Brigade!

This lyric quality adds distinction to her most extravagant nonsense and cannot but improve children's sound-sense for words even as they chuckle over the content.

Mrs. Richards' writing record was a remarkable achievement. She began in 1873 to contribute to the pages of *St. Nicholas*. She is said to have published somewhere around sixty books for children. In 1939, when she

From L. Leslie Brooke's *Johnny Crow's Garden*, Warne (book 6½ x 8)

No one can make furry or feathered  
faces reveal more than Leslie  
Brooke. The owl is shocked, but  
Johnny Crow is too polite to  
chase the goose away.



And the Goose—  
Well,

was eighty-nine, she gave us *What Shall Children Read*, a sensible little commentary on books for children. In the dark summer of 1940, when Mrs. Richards was ninety-one years old, the "Conning Tower" of the New York *Post* published her response to the tragedy of the war—"Dunkirk."

Now Laura Richards has gone, but children will continue to enjoy the tunes her hurdy-gurdy played so long and so melodiously.

**Leslie Brooke, 1862-1940**

*Johnny Crow's Garden*

*Johnny Crow's Party*

Young children, four to six, are fortunate if they receive their first nonsense after *Mother Goose* from the hands of a distinguished artist. Leslie Brooke always loved the stories

about "Johnny Crow" which his father, a novelist, used to tell him. When Leslie Brooke grew up and had two sons of his own, he in turn told them about "Johnny Crow." At his wife's suggestion he translated this genial bird into pictures and verse, and in 1903 published *Johnny Crow's Garden*, which he dedicated to his sons. A few years later came *Johnny Crow's Party*. Some thirty years passed before *Johnny Crow's New Garden* appeared, dedicated to young Peter Brooke, a grandson. These three books about Johnny Crow's garden would amuse any generation of small children. The mannerly Johnny Crow himself, the "preposserous rhin-oserous," the cow and the sow who sing "Squeal and Low"—these and other friendly beasts come and go through the pages of the

three picture books with grave absurdity.

Children are great sticklers for details, and here is an artist who never made any slips. Each animal runs true to form and costume through innumerable adventures. The lion in *Johnny Crow's New Garden* is even wearing the same necktie he wore to the first garden party thirty years before.

It seems a pity for today's children to miss the Johnny Crow books, but, sad to relate, they have almost vanished from juvenile bookshelves in the United States. Perhaps the language and the humor are too subtle or too British. More likely it is because

### From nonsense to humor

Although no hard and fast line divides humor from sheer nonsense, there is, nevertheless, a difference. Nonsense is more daft, more impossible, with Pobbles, Jumbles, potatoes that dance, chickens that go out to tea, gargoyles and griffins—a wild crew close kin to the “cow that jumped over the moon.” Humorous verse, on the other hand, deals with the amusing things that befall real people, or might conceivably befall them. Edward Lear and Laura E. Richards sometimes wrote humorous verse, but for the most part their contributions are on the side of hilarious nonsense. In contrast, A. A. Milne writes occasional nonsense, but on the whole his poems involve people and situations that are amusingly possible, however improbable they may be. This distinction is not too important, and there is no reason for debating the classification of any particular poem on this score. It is mentioned only because nonsense verse is not an adequate description of the plausible fun of the English writer, A. A. Milne.

A. A. Milne, 1882-1956

When We Were Very Young  
Now We Are Six

A pleasant way to meet Mr. Milne is to read his *Autobiography*. This book contains more than the life of an author. It is a series of amusing and significant reminiscences of a

mothers and fathers don't know the books or, if they do, don't take time to talk over and savor the jokes with the small children for whom they were intended. Look at the picture on page 115, for example. The non-reading child must have the sign read to him, and then he will know that the Goose—well, the Goose is a goose in this picture and forevermore. Good manners are here, too, from Johnny Crow, the perfect host, to the appreciative guests. In these famous picture books Leslie Brooke has created as choice an array of illustrations for children as can be found anywhere.

man who not only enjoyed his own childhood but has a rare understanding of children. The opening paragraph is characteristic:

“Once upon a time there was a man who had three sons”—this was how we began, this was how the fairy stories began. And as our governess read them aloud to their inevitable end, Barry looked at Ken, and the two of them looked at Alan, and I looked as little complacent as I could, knowing that the third son was the good one, yet in a way sorry that his character was so blameless, his destiny so assured. Perhaps, after all, the others would get more fun out of life. In another moment Barry would be turned into a toadstool, and Ken into a two-headed bear; interesting, interesting; but the third son would only kill the same old dragon and come into the same old Kingdom, just as he had done a hundred times before. Oh, to be Barry or Ken for once, to miss this easy good fortune by the simple and attractive method of being rude to a godmother, how exciting that would be!

Mr. Milne goes on to tell us that his mother, usually so competent and practical in most matters, *would* dress the three brothers like Little Lord Fauntleroy and keep their blond curls long. He testifies that old ladies instinctively adored them, and boys yearned to kick them. His father, to compensate for this, determined that they should be manly souls at all costs, and the boys were hard-



pressed to maintain their "manliness" with the handicap of floating curls.

Milne's father was not only the head of the first school the boys attended, but he was evidently a born teacher. A walk with him meant learning about caterpillars or the law of gravity, or doing fascinating problems. Here, evidently, was no dull pedant, because grown-up Alan testifies that he learned what his father taught and failed to learn what others taught. He recalls their great delight in the books their father read aloud to them. They loved *Uncle Remus* when their father read it and could not abide the sound of it when the nurse took it over. They found *Pilgrim's Progress* a thriller even though they suspected it was meant to be uplifting. Anything they did with their father they enjoyed. Here is the father's analysis of Alan:

He does not like French—does not see that you prove anything when you have done. Thinks mathematics grand. He leaves his books about; loses his pen; can't imagine what he did with this, and where he put that, but is convinced that it is somewhere. Clears his brain when asked a question by spouting out some nonsense, and then immediately after gives a sensible reply. Can speak 556 words per minute, and writes more in three minutes than his instructor can read in thirty. Finds this a very interesting world, and would like to learn physiology, botany, geology, astronomy and everything else. Wishes to make collections of beetles, bones, butterflies, etc., and cannot determine whether Algebra is better than football, or Euclid than a sponge-cake (p. 59)

Milne confesses that there was no close bond between him and his mother. He admired her and loved her at a distance. She meant comfort and competent care but remained to her children "restfully aloof." It was their father they adored.

After Cambridge, where Milne disappointed his father by coming out only third in mathematics instead of first, the two of them faced the fact that writing was the one thing the grown-up Alan wished to do and nothing else. With 320 pounds he went to

London and began writing a thousand words a day, sending his finished pieces to various magazines. At the end of the first month one magazine had paid him fifteen shillings. By the end of the first year all of his money was gone, and he had earned only twenty pounds. However, *Punch* had published one of his dialogues, and he was not too disheartened. By the end of the second year he was supporting himself, and the third year he was appointed assistant editor of *Punch* with an assured income and the chance to increase it. He was just twenty-four years old.

Financially secure, he married and had just started writing plays when the first World War came. He wrote of the needless brutality of war with understandable bitterness, but he managed to keep on writing and actually produced three plays during his years in service.

After the war, a son was born to the Milnes—Christopher Robin. As soon as he could talk he gave himself the name of "Billy Moon," and "Moon" he was called by everyone. For this reason, Milne explains, the name "Christopher Robin" always seemed to belong entirely to the public's little boy, not to his own.

At the time Milne was writing plays and other adult literature, he gave his wife a verse about Christopher Robin—"Vespers"—which she sent off to a magazine and had accepted. Then Rose Fyleman, who was publishing a magazine for children, asked Milne to contribute some children's verses and, after firmly refusing, he changed his mind and sent them after all. When both the editor and the illustrator advised him to do a whole book of them, he felt it was a foolish thing to do, but again he complied. He had, he said, as preparation for the task, three years of living with his son and "unforgettable memories of my own childhood." The result was *When We Were Very Young*, a major sensation in children's books both in England and America. It shares with the second book, *Now We Are Six*, an undiminishing popularity year after year. *Mr. Pim Passes By* is a whimsical, charming adult drama; so are *Michael and Mary* and *The Dover Road*; but in the genera-

tions to come it is probable that Milne's reputation as a writer will rest more securely upon his two books of verse for children than upon any of his adult stories and dramas. Why are these light-hearted verses so unforgettable?

### Knowledge of children

Milne's first charm is his ability to present small children as they are. He gives us their bemused absorption in their private inner world of make-believe, their blithe egotism, their liking for small animals, their toys and games, and the peculiar angle from which they view the odd behavior of those adults who move vaguely on the fringe of their private world.

Christopher Robin speaks for the make-believe of children around four to six years old. His imaginative world is not peopled with the fairies of the eight-year-old but is just the everyday sort of play of the nursery age. One chair is South America and another is a lion's cage. When walking with his nurse becomes just too stale, flat, and unprofitable to be endured, Christopher scares himself into a pleasant spinal chill by imagining that bears are skulking just around the corner and are watching his approach with a sinister smacking of the lips. Only he fools them, of course, and gets away. This is characteristic play for a solitary but well-cared-for child. So, too, are his imaginary companions. There is Binker, visible only to Christopher Robin, and there is the omnipresent Pooch, who appears in both the poems and the prose adventures.

Much has been written about the egocentricity of the young child's thought and language, but it has never been recorded more accurately than by A. A. Milne. Christopher Robin goes to the market looking for a rabbit and is naively astonished that the market men should be selling mackerel and fresh lavender when *he*, Christopher Robin, wants rabbits. He catalogues his articles of clothing, fascinating because they are his. You can hear the smug emphasis on the personal pronoun. Changing the guard at Buckingham may be very impressive, but the child's only concern

is, "Do you think the King knows all about Me?" This is a typical four-year-old, thinking and speaking of everything in terms of himself—an amusing and endearing little egoist!

Knowing children's interests, Milne reflects them in his writing. There we find the child's love of small animals: dormice, rabbits, puppies, snails, and goats, whose antics and vicissitudes enliven the verses. Toys are there, too—balls, tops, hoops, and the beloved teddy bear. The verses are full of the small child's activities, also. He walks, rolls, and plays. He gets sand between his toes. He stalks down the sidewalk missing all the lines. He sits on the stairs and meditates, or he goes hoppitty, hoppitty, hop. He enjoys complete happiness when he gets his mackintosh and waterproof boots on. He sometimes refuses rice pudding (or rather Mary Jane does), and he often re-sents foolish adult questions. On the whole, he is a busy, active child, immersed in his own affairs and oblivious of any world beyond his own horizon.

The self-sufficiency of children is also evident in these verses. We soon realize that Christopher Robin is an only child. "Mummy" and "Daddy" are there, and Nana, the nurse, chaperones his every walk, but where are the other children? There are Mary Jane, and John of the waterproof boots, and Emmeline, whose hands were "purfickly clean," but these, too, are lone children with only supervising adults in the offing. None of these children plays with other children. There are no brothers or sisters or even neighbors' children, but neither Christopher Robin nor the young readers of these verses seem to miss them in the least. Perhaps because the young child is so astonishingly egocentric and lives so completely within a world of his own, these verses that speak understandingly of one child speak adequately for all children alone or in groups.

### Technique

Again we find, as in the poetry of all these humorists, a juggling with funny words: "sneezles and freezles," foxes who didn't wear

"sockses," "biffalo-buffalo-bisons," "badgers and bidgers and bodgers," and a mouse with a "woffelly nose." The children seize upon them as their very own, for these words are exactly what they might have said. If you study Milne's funny words, you discover that they fall within the range of the child's own vocabulary. Here we find no "fatally fair flamingo" of the older child's level, but the measles and "sneezles" that "teasles" the funnybone of the little child because they are all close to words he recognizes. When words go rambunctious, they are funnier to us if we know them well in their prosaic workaday form. Hence the success of Mr. Milne's word-teasing with young children.

No one can tell a better tall tale for children than Alan Alexander Milne. For examples, read "The King's Breakfast," "Disobedience," "Teddy Bear," "The Dormouse and the Doctor," and perhaps "Bad Sir Brian Botany." Some boys were convinced that they detested all "pomes," but, after listening to "Disobedience" read aloud several times, they were heard chanting it vociferously. After that, they wanted Milne and more Milne and progressed steadily in their respect and liking for "pomes."

Usually it is "The King's Breakfast" that is the favorite with most Milne addicts. This starts reasonably with the king asking for a little butter on the "Royal slice of bread," and it moves along smoothly until the sleepy Alderney upsets all royal regularity by suggesting "a little marmalade instead." From then on the dialogue becomes entirely daft, reaching a joyous climax when the king bounces out of bed and slides down the banisters. This is, of course, the essence of the fun—the incongruity of a king who is so deeply concerned with marmalade that he whimpers, sulks, bounces, and slides down banisters. The verse pattern of each episode reinforces the mood.

Read Mr. Milne's two little books, *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*, and you will discover an author who knows how to write verse that dances, skips, medi-

tates, and changes to reflect changing moods. We can analyze his tripping trochees, his iambs and dactyls, but those academic names do not seem to convey any idea of the fluid and flashing use Mr. Milne makes of words, rhyme, and rhythm to convey character, mood, and action. For example, read "Buckingham Palace" aloud and hear the marching of soldiers in the background throughout those brief descriptions and the whispered conversations of Alice and Christopher. The feet thud, thud, thud through every line. So, too, when Christopher Robin hops through the jingle called "Hopptity," the lines go in exactly the pattern of a child's hop, ending with a big one and a rest, just as hopping always does. But best of all is that juvenile meditation, "Halfway Down." Ernest Shepard's sketch, too, has caught the mood of suspended action that is always overtaking small children on stairs. Why they like to clutter up stairs with their belongings and their persons only Mr. Milne knows, and he has told us with arresting monosyllables that block the way as effectually as Christopher Robin's small person blocks the stairs. In this first stanza from "Halfway Down" notice "It" and "Stop," which sit as firmly in the middle of the verse as Christopher on the stair.

Halfway down the stairs  
Is a stair  
Where I sit.  
There isn't any  
Other stair  
Quite like  
It.  
I'm not at the bottom,  
I'm not at the top;  
So this is the stair  
Where  
I always  
Stop.

Over and over again, Mr. Milne makes a monosyllable or a single word equal by sheer intensity three or four words in a preceding line. It is a device that compels correct reading of the lines, regardless of scansion. Look through the pages of these little books, *When*

*We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*, and notice the appearance of the verses on the page. The visible pattern they make in print shows you something of the intricacy and variety of Mr. Milne's verse forms, although their full flavor and fun are not evident until they are heard. Read them aloud and they fall upon the ear with such natural and easy perfection that they are memorized almost as soon as the words are familiar.

With all of these virtues, it is not surprising that some moderns have come to feel that Milne is the child's greatest poet, certainly their favorite poet. This enthusiasm would be harmless enough if it did not apparently curtail all further exploration on the part of some of Milne's admirers. Delightful as his verses are, they do not cover the full range either of the child's interests or of his capacity for enjoying poetry. Many poets achieve greater lyric beauty, more delicate imagery, and deeper feeling for the child's inner world.

The child should know such poets as well as A. A. Milne.

But certainly we shall never encounter a writer who understands more completely the curious composite of gravity and gaiety, of supreme egotism and occasional whimsy that is the young child. A. A. Milne has written humorous verses for children, composed with deft craftsmanship and a sure knowledge of the little child's world, which should make them live as long as people live who love light-hearted English verse at its best.

### Illustrations by Ernest H. Shepard

We cannot leave Milne's books without considering the illustrations. Never was an author more happily paired with an artist than A. A. Milne with Ernest Shepard. The tiny pen-and-ink sketches capture the mood of every poem—Christopher Robin going hoppity, hoppity, hop; the banister-sliding King; and Mary Jane sulking over her rice pudding after kicking a disdainful shoe into the air. Indeed, you have only to glance at one of these tiny figures to know exactly what is happening inwardly as well as outwardly. In "Halfway Down," the small figure is planted in a dreamy, meditative but solid pose that makes you feel just how hard it's going to be to dislodge him. "Puppy and I" skip joyously; and Christopher Robin, looking pained and surprised at the absence of rabbits, catechizes the men in "Market Square." Pooh is there, too, the same solid, jaunty teddy bear we shall meet later on in the Pooh stories (p. 337). These are pen-and-ink sketches with a liveliness and a swift characterization that match the clever verses. There is action, too, of

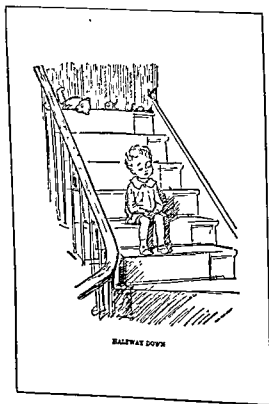


Illustration by Ernest H. Shepard for *When We Were Very Young* by A. A. Milne, Dutton, 1924 (book 4 1/2 x 7)

*Ernest Shepard's Christopher Robin is usually pictured in lively action, but here he is shown lost in thought, even Pooh forgotten. This artist always catches the exact mood of A. A. Milne's poems.*

Illustration by Rosalind Thornycroft for *Kings and Queens*  
by Eleanor and Herbert Farjeon, Dutton, 1940  
(original in color, book 7 x 9½)

Notice how cleverly the artist suggests a  
playing card king (the original illustration is in  
bright colors with red and yellow predominating).  
This stylized and amusing interpretation of  
King Hal is in the mood of the poem.



course, but it is the interpretative quality of  
these pictures that makes them illustrations  
in the best sense of the word.

### Rose Fyleman, 1877-

Picture Rhymes from Foreign Lands

In spite of the fact that most of Rose Fyleman's poems are dedicated to fairies (p. 178), she comes to earth now and then with such amusing bits as "Mrs. Brown," "The Dentist," or "Mary Middling."

In addition to these nonsense verses occasionally found in anthologies, Rose Fyleman is responsible for an international *Mother Goose* called *Picture Rhymes from Foreign Lands*, with translations of nursery rhymes from many countries. It is a pity this treasury of nonsense is out of print, because young children who are exposed to it learn and love the galloping "Husky Hi" as well as they do "Ride a cock horse."

### HUSKY HI

Husky hi, husky hi,  
Here comes Keery galloping by.  
She carries her husband tied in a sack,  
She carries him home on her horse's back.  
Husky hi, husky hi,  
Here comes Keery galloping by!

The Dutch "Jonathan Gee" and the French "My Donkey" and "The Goblin" (p. 215) are among the dozen or more favorites that the children demand over and over. The delicate refrain of "My Donkey" and the clumping, thumping "Goblin" make a pleasant contrast. Both poems are fine material for verse choirs. Rose Fyleman's musical gifts were never employed to better advantage than in

these rollicking nursery rhymes which she has translated so effectively.

### Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-

*Kings and Queens*

*Mighty Men* (in two volumes)

*Nursery Rhymes of London Town*

*More Nursery Rhymes of London Town*

Another English contributor to the gaiety of verses is Eleanor Farjeon (p. 138). She frolics through history from Achilles to Elizabeth II. The history of England's *Kings and Queens* related by Eleanor Farjeon and her brother Herbert has just been republished, but her *Mighty Men from Achilles to Caesar* and *Mighty Men from Beowulf to William the Conqueror* are for the most part obtainable only in large libraries. Older children wrestling with the sometimes oppressive solemnity of English history immediately cheer up when they encounter Henry VIII in this guise:

Bluff King Hal was full of beans;  
He married half a dozen queens;  
For three called Kate they cried the banns,  
And one called Jane, and a couple of Annes.

Or children like the martial nonsense of

#### WHEN HANNIBAL CROSSED THE ALPS

Hannibal crossed the Alps!

Hannibal crossed the Alps!

With his black men,

His brown men,

His countrymen,

His townmen.

With his Gauls, and his Spaniards, his horses

and elephants,

Hannibal crossed the Alps!

Hannibal crossed the Alps!

Hannibal crossed the Alps!

For his bowmen,

His spearmen,

His front men,

His rear men,

His Gauls and his Spaniards, his horses and  
elephants,

Wanted the Roman scalps!

And *that's* why Hannibal, Hannibal, Hannibal,

Hannibal crossed the Alps!

Miss Farjeon's two other collections of nonsense verse, *Nursery Rhymes of London Town* and *More Nursery Rhymes of London Town*, may not be as meaningful to American children as to English children. But here is a delicate little tongue-twister which needs only the explanation that in London, flower girls selling their wares sit around the fountain in Piccadilly Circus.

#### PICCADILLY

Pick a dilly! pick a daffy! pick a daffy-dilly!

The flower girls at the fountain head are  
nodding willy-nilly.

Quick! before they wake again, slip among  
them, will ye?

And pick a dilly, pick a daffy, pick a  
daffy-dilly!

Older children should not miss Eleanor Farjeon's unique nonsense. Her verses of other types are discussed in the next chapter.

#### Vachel Lindsay, 1879-1931

Vachel Lindsay enchants small children with his nonsensical "The Potatoes' Dance," which

tells of the sad romance between the Irish lady and the hapless sweet potato. If children hear it twice, they begin to chant it with you, memorizing it in a jiffy. Vachel Lindsay himself calls it a "poem game." Here are the first twenty-eight lines:

#### THE POTATOES' DANCE

"Down cellar," said the cricket,  
"Down cellar," said the cricket,  
"Down cellar," said the cricket,  
"I saw a ball last night,  
In honor of a lady,  
In honor of a lady,  
In honor of a lady,  
Whose wings were pearly white.  
The breath of bitter weather,  
The breath of bitter weather,  
The breath of bitter weather,  
Had smashed the cellar pane.  
We entertained a drift of leaves,  
We entertained a drift of leaves,  
We entertained a drift of leaves,  
And then of snow and rain.  
But we were dressed for winter,  
But we were dressed for winter,  
But we were dressed for winter,  
And loved to hear it blow  
In honor of the lady,  
In honor of the lady,  
In honor of the lady,  
Who makes potatoes grow,  
Our guest the Irish lady,  
The tiny Irish lady,  
The airy Irish lady,  
Who makes potatoes grow.

Most of Vachel Lindsay's contribution belongs to youth and adults rather than to children. "Daniel," "The Santa Fe Trail," "General William Booth Enters into Heaven," and "The Congo" should not be missed by older boys and girls. All use repetition to develop a great swinging rhythm that is almost hypnotic in its effect. The two poems which are enjoyed by young children, "The Potatoes' Dance" and "The Mysterious Cat," develop this same hypnotic rhythm. One little group of six-year-olds who loved "The Potatoes' Dance" used to step it, from one foot to the other, as they said it. This brought a group

swing that added enormously to the effect of the lines. Step, step, step, step, they went until they reached the line,

There was just one sweet potato.

Then their stepping ceased and that sudden cessation of all movement marked with dramatic intensity the coming of the mock-tragedy. This was an entirely spontaneous, almost reflex response of young children to Vachel Lindsay's swinging rhythm that seems to demand a bodily response.

**Stephen Vincent Benét, 1898-1943**

**Rosemary Carr Benét**

*A Book of Americans*

Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benét have contributed richly to the laughter and understanding of older children and adults with their *Book of Americans*. It is a collection of Americana in verse: famous legends about famous people from Christopher Columbus, Pocahontas, and Johnny Appleseed to Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson. The verse forms are uninspired, but the nonsense is hilarious and often penetrating.

All three Benét children wrote poetry although they should, by all counts, have been more interested in martial activities. The father, grandfather, and great-grandfather were all officers in the United States Army, and the children lived in various army posts. However, their father, Colonel James Walker Benét, had a great love of poetry which he evidently shared with his children, for they, too, grew up not only loving it but writing it as well. Stephen Vincent Benét's most famous poem is, of course, *John Brown's Body*, published in 1928. *A Book of Americans* he wrote in collaboration with his wife, Rosemary Carr Benét.

"Pilgrims and Puritans" is a humorous presentation of the two sides of these colonists:

#### PILGRIMS AND PURITANS

The Pilgrims and the Puritans  
Were English to the bone  
But didn't like the English Church  
And wished to have their own

And so, at last, they sailed away  
To settle Massachusetts Bay.

And there they found New England rocks  
And Indians with bows on  
But didn't mind them half as much  
(Though they were nearly frozen)  
As being harried, mocked and spurned in  
Old England for the faith they burned in.

The stony fields, the cruel sea  
They met with resolution  
And so developed, finally,  
An iron constitution  
And, as a punishment for sinners,  
Invented boiled New England dinners.

They worked and traded, fished and farmed  
And made New England mighty  
On codfish, conscience, self-respect  
And smuggled aqua-vitae.  
They hated fun. They hated fools.  
They liked plain manners and good schools.

They fought and suffered, starved and died  
For their own way of thinking  
But people who had different views  
They popped, as quick as winking,  
Within the roomy local jail  
Or whipped through town at the cart's rail.

They didn't care for Quakers but  
They loathed gay cavaliers  
And what they thought of clowns and plays  
Would simply burn your ears  
While merry tunes and Christmas revels  
They deemed contraptions of the Devil's.

But Sunday was a gala day  
When, in their best attire,  
They'd listen, with rejoicing hearts,  
To sermons on Hell Fire,  
Demons I've Met, Grim Satan's Prey,  
And other topics just as gay.

And so they lived and so they died,  
A stern but hardy people,  
And so their memory goes on  
In school house, green and steeple,  
In elms and turkeys and Thanksgiving  
And much that still is very living

For, every time we think, "Aha!  
I'm better than Bill Jinks,  
So he must do just as I say  
No matter what he thinks  
Or else I'm going to whack him hard!"  
The Puritan's in our backyard.

But, when we face a bitter task  
With resolute defiance,  
And cope with it, and never ask  
To fight with less than giants  
And win or lose, but seldom yell  
—Why, that's the Puritan, as well.

Children like "Captain Kidd," "Peregrine White and Virginia Dare," and the larruping "Theodore Roosevelt." These are genuinely funny. The boys enjoy rolling out "David Glasgow Farragut," which begins

"Damn the torpedoes!"  
Bold Farragut said,  
"Damn the torpedoes!  
Full speed ahead!"

and ends sagely with

So remember, if ever  
You face such a plight,  
There's a pretty good chance,  
"Straight ahead!" will be right.  
And while "damn" as you know,  
Is a word to eschew—  
He knew when to say it—  
So few people do.

The poem about the Wright brothers is particularly appreciated today by nine- and ten-year-olds for its humorous account of a momentous event in human history.

This book is Americana with a spice of homely wisdom and a pleasant veneration for the men and the legends that make our history colorful. In the midst of the fun, "Nancy Hanks" is poignant and unforgettable. See p. 591 for two children's answers to the poem. Lincoln, Hamilton, and Jefferson are also dealt with in serious vein. On the whole, however, the fifty-five verses in this book are amusing satires or plain rollicking nonsense. No American child should miss them.

**James Whitcomb Riley, 1849-1916**

The tremendous popularity of James Whitcomb Riley's humorous verse seems to be waning, although a few of his children's poems persist in most of our anthologies. His verses have a homespun philosophy and a mild humor, but they rarely bubble or sparkle.

They are newspaper verse with a rural flavor that appeals strongly to many people. At least two of his poems seem to be permanently popular with children—"The Raggedy Man" and "Little Orphant Annie." The latter, having to do with the fate of two outrageously naughty children, is genuinely amusing.

**Eugene Field, 1850-1895**

Another newspaper poet popular with the last generation is Eugene Field. While "The Rock-a-By-Lady," "Little Boy Blue," and "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod" are undoubtedly his best loved poems, "The Duel" occupies a special niche in the affectionate regard of the fives and sixes. This mock tragedy about the gingham dog and the calico cat who "ate each other up" has a pleasant swing to it and a delightful refrain. Compared with "The Duel," Field's "The Sugar-Plum Tree" seems extremely labored and much of his verse sentimental or self-conscious.

"Little Boy Blue," although long popular in anthologies, is an adult reminiscence about the pathos and evanescence of childhood. It is *about* children rather than *for* them and is typical of the sort of thing even our best poets include now and then among their poems addressed to children. Let's omit these adult reminiscences of childhood wherever we find them. There is a pleasant lyric quality about "The Rock-a-By-Lady" and the elaborate metaphor "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," but, aside from "The Duel," there is little real humor in Field's poems for children.

**Other writers of light verse**

There are, of course, many other writers of light verse for children and many humorous poems to be found here and there among the books of serious writers. Shakespeare (p. 161) resorts to pure nonsense now and then, usually by way of a song. Christina Rossetti (p. 167) includes in her charming lyrics one or two which might have come from Mother Goose herself. Walter de la Mare (p. 180) in his subtle and highly imaginative poetry pauses to describe poor Henry taking a dose



of physic, or to give us a startling account of the weebegone fish in "Alas, Alack!"

ALAS, ALACK!

Ann, Ann!  
Come! quick as you can!  
There's a fish that talks  
In the frying pan.  
Out of the fat,  
As clear as glass,  
He put up his mouth  
And moaned "Alas!"

Oh, most mournful,  
"Alas, alack!"  
Then turned to his sizzling,  
And sank him back.

Neither Lear nor Richards surpasses "Alas, Alack!" for sheer preposterousness, doubly astonishing because it seems so plausible. This is typical of the occasional bright bits of hilarity you may find tucked in between the pages of serious poetry or appearing now and then in our magazines.

## New voices in the second half of the century

### David McCord, 1897-

*Far and Few: Rhymes of the Never Was and Always Is*

David McCord first began writing verse at fifteen, encouraged, he believes, by two solitary years on an Oregon ranch. After his school years at Harvard, his verses appeared frequently in newspaper columns and magazines. One of his books won the William Rose Benét Award of the Poetry Society of America. *Far and Few* is his fifteenth book of verse, a choice collection of his poems for children. They range from pure nonsense to quiet little meditations that reflect, perhaps, those solitary years out of doors. Here are two examples of this range of mood.

NOTICE<sup>1</sup>

I have a dog,  
I had a cat.  
I've got a frog  
Inside my hat.

THIS IS MY ROCK

This is my rock,  
And here I run  
To steal the secret of the sun;  
This is my rock,  
And here come I  
Before the night has swept the sky;  
This is my rock,  
This is the place  
I meet the evening face to face.

It would be entirely proper to include Mr. McCord's book in the next chapter on "Poetry of the Child's World." But his nonsense is so adroitly turned, his light verse is so feather light, and there are so few good craftsmen in this field that his unique brand of humor makes him a welcome addition to the writers in the gay tradition.

The book opens with a poem about "Joe" the greedy squirrel who keeps the birds waiting. It closes with "Fred," an intrepid flying squirrel, the original glider. Children and grown-ups who provide feeding tables will recognize both these characters. Here is

JOE

We feed the birds in winter,  
And outside in the snow  
We have a tray of many seeds  
For many birds of many breeds  
And one gray squirrel named Joe.  
But Joe comes early,  
Joe comes late,  
And all the birds  
Must stand and wait.  
And waiting there for Joe to go  
Is pretty cold work in the snow.

Other small beasties are gaily presented—bats, grasshoppers, a snail, starfish, and an especially convincing crowd of crows "spilling from a tree." For sheer nonsense "Five Chants," "In the Middle," "Who Wants a Birthday?" and "Isabel Jones & Curabel Lee"

<sup>1</sup>Copyright 1952 by David McCord.



Illustration by Henry B. Kone for *Far and Few* by David McCord, Little, Brown, 1952 (book 5 x 8, picture 2 x 2)

*Carefree nonchalance is in every line of this blithe boyish figure. Up hill and down dale is there too. Only the quivering hat suggests the last line of "Notice."*

are fun. Children under six like to roll the onomatopoeic refrains of "Song of the Train" and "The Pickety Fence" on their tongues. But it takes a perceptive older child to appreciate "The White Ships," "The Shell," "The Starfish," "Tiggady Rue," and "The Star in the Pail."

William Jay Smith, 1918-

#### Laughing Time

"I like this book," said the King of Hearts.  
"It makes me laugh the way it starts!"

"I like it also," said his Mother.  
So they sat down and read it to each other.

An ideal approach to verse, and, in the case of these verses, repeat performances are inevitable. For they are genuinely funny jingles, not too subtle for the nursery crowd and not too simple for the sevens and for the grown-ups who must, perforce, read them aloud. "Laughing Time" is such infectious nonsense that you begin to smile as you look at the pictures and read the verses.

#### LAUGHING TIME

It was laughing time, and the tall Giraffe  
Lifted his head and began to laugh:

Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

And the Chimpanzee on the ginkgo tree  
Swung merrily down with a Tee Hee Hee:

Hee! Hee! Hee! Hee!

"It's certainly not against the law!"

Croaked Justice Crow with a loud guffaw:

Haw! Haw! Haw! Haw!

The dancing Bear who could never say "No"  
Waltzed up and down on the tip of his toe:

Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho!

The Donkey daintily took his paw,  
And around they went: Hee-Haw! Hee-Haw!

Hee-Haw! Hee-Haw!

The Moon had to smile as it started to climb;  
All over the world it was laughing time!

Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! Hee-Haw! Hee-Haw!  
Hee! Hee! Hee! Hee! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

After the children have heard this once, the obvious next step is for the adult to read the narrative, with the child or children coming in on the laughing choruses, with a grand finale at the end. It is a natural for verse choirs.

"Why" will catch you napping. Why, indeed! "The Toaster" is a gem that will set the older children dreaming up more uses for domesticated Dragons.

#### THE TOASTER

A silver-scaled Dragon with jaws flaming red  
Sits at my elbow and toasts my bread.  
I hand him fat slices, and then, one by one,  
He hands them back when he sees they are done.

"Moon" belongs to cat lovers of any age, from children to T. S. Eliot. This "proud, mysterious" feline is in the best tradition. But it may be that only adults will suffer from the full import of "People."

Illustration by Juliet Kepes from *Laughing Time* by William Jay Smith, Little, Brown, 1953 (original in color, book 6¼ x 8¼)

*Here is bold, grandiloquent nonsense—a dragon toasting bread! With flowing outline, all angles and quirks, and with a saucy tail and ferocious flames, Juliet Kepes illustrates the extravagant metaphor of the poem.*

#### PEOPLE

Hour after hour,  
In many places,  
People sit,  
Making faces.

"Things," "Jittery Jim," "Dictionary," "Big and Little," and many others are delightfully funny. Perhaps the feckless mood of these verses is best summed up by the picture for "Pick Me Up." And the final verse speaks for all the children who enjoy this book.

"I like this book," said the King of Spain.  
"I think I'll read it through again."

#### Ogden Nash, Phyllis McGinley, William Cole

Ogden Nash is, of course, one of the most successful modern practitioners of the art of nonsense verse. He is a master of the outrageous surprise rhyme that leaves the reader gasping and hilarious. Most of his verses are sophisticated adult humor, but it is a poor anthology that cannot find among Mr. Nash's riches a rib-tickling selection or two for children.

*The Love Letters of Phyllis McGinley* is a treasury of light verse for the edification of grown-ups and clever teen-age youngsters. Phyllis McGinley is a master craftsman, and most of her subject matter is as contemporary as television. But this book is not for children. Only the delightful verses of her ABC book, *All Around the Town* (p. 74), belong to them. This alphabet and her stories for children prove she can write for them if she will, and let's hope she does.



Most anthologies have a generous selection of humorous poems, and William Cole's *Humorous Poetry for Children* is a big and unusual anthology. In spite of the title, more of the verses are for teen-age and adult levels than for children. But there are enough funny ones for the tens to twelves to make the book decidedly worth adding to the library of laughter both in elementary schools and homes. These verses are great fun to read aloud.

Anthologists have not found all the humorous verse that has been written, and it is a rewarding activity to make a collection of your own, or to encourage children to make such a collection. Clever, well-written verses which provoke a chuckle are worth having not only because they bring laughter into this grave old world, but because their rollicking jingles cultivate the ear and lead naturally and painlessly to the enjoyment of lyric poetry.



Illustration from Zhenya Gay's  
*Jingle Jangle*, Viking, 1953 (book 6 x 9¼)

*Zhenya Gay evidently knows small boys. Here is one, oblivious of bare midriff while he concentrates with utter absorption on producing an ear splitting whistle from a blade of grass. With soft pencil sketches she re creates the everyday world of happy children.*

In the years before Edward Lear introduced children to his madcap world of nonsense, they had been given to understand that life is not only real but decidedly earnest. Poems were written and read to children for the purpose of improving their manners and uplifting their morals. Yet didactic as some of these early efforts seem today, they marked a dawning recognition of the child's everyday world of people and play, both real and imaginative. Slowly the idea took form and grew, the idea of a child, not as a small adult, but as an in-

tensely active person, functioning in a world of his own, a world which, for lack of a better word, adults call "play." Poetry for children

arrived at this point of view slowly. It began as their stories began, with the idea of teaching them moral lessons.

## Early poets of manners and morals

In the didactic period the poets seem to have been a less fearsome group than the prose writers for children. Gaiety came into poetry sooner, and verses began to show a real observation of and love for children.

### Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

#### Divine and Moral Songs for Children

Isaac Watts, a non-conformist preacher, was famous in his own time for his textbooks on *Logick* and on *Principles of Geography and Astronomy*. Today he is best known for his hymns and for certain little moralistic verses for children. Old school readers and early anthologies always used to include such typical selections as this warning:

#### AGAINST IDLENESS AND MISCHIEF

How doth the little busy bee  
Improve each shining hour  
And gather honey all the day  
From every opening flow'r.

How skilfully she builds her cell;  
How neat she spreads her wax,  
And labors hard to store it well  
With the sweet food she makes.

In works of labor or of skill,  
I would be busy too;  
For Satan finds some mischief still  
For idle hands to do.

In books, or work, or healthful play,  
Let my first days be past,  
That I may give for ev'ry day  
Some good account at last.

Watts wrote these and similar verses because he believed that poetry is not only entertaining to children but is more readily memorized than prose. He was right, of course. In *Divine and Moral Songs for Children* he gave this "Introduction to Parents

and all who are concerned in the Education of Children":

What is learnt in verse, is longer retained in memory, and sooner recollected.

This will be a constant furniture for the minds of children that they may have something to think of when alone; and may repeat to themselves.

He concluded, then, that since a child learns and recalls rhymes so easily, he might as well learn moral lessons in that form. So he composed his *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*. It was first published in 1715, and so many succeeding editions have been published that there is a whole book devoted to its history and the listing of the numerous editions.<sup>1</sup> Read over the Watts hymns to be found in any modern hymnal and see how meaningful most of them still are: "Joy to the world," "When I survey the wondrous cross," "Come, Holy Spirit," "There is a land of pure delight," and "O God, our help in ages past." Little children should also know at least the first verse of his "Cradle Hymn," with its tender reassurance of safety and well-being:

Hush! my dear, lie still and slumber,  
Holy Angels guard thy bed!  
Heavenly blessings without number,  
Gently falling on thy head.

Such hymns make a center of peace and encouragement for children. We may forget Isaac Watts' moral preachments, but we shall sing his hymns "while life shall last."

### Ann Taylor, 1782-1866

#### Jane Taylor, 1783-1824

Original Poems for Infant Minds  
Rhymes for the Nursery  
Hymns for Infant Minds

<sup>1</sup>Wilbur Macy Stone, *The Divine and Moral Songs of Isaac Watts; An Essay thereon and a tentative list of Editions*. Privately printed for The Truptych, 1918.

Ann and Jane Taylor are credited with being the first English authors to write wholly for children. They were literary descendants of Isaac Watts at his most moralistic, and although they never achieved the serene beauty of his best religious poetry, they did venture further into the child's world, and they wrote some nature lyrics without moral lessons.

Ann and Jane were the daughters of intellectual parents and enjoyed a happy family life in the lovely English countryside. They wrote most of the poems in *Original Poems for Infant Minds: By Several Young Persons* (1804), while Adelaide O'Keefe contributed a few verses. *Rhymes for the Nursery* (1806) and *Hymns for Infant Minds* (1808) followed, and were written entirely by the Taylors. The sisters wrote so much alike that only the initial which sometimes follows a verse identifies the author.

The titles of the verses indicate their improving content: "The Vulgar Little Lady," "Dirty Jim," "Meddlesome Matty," "Contented John." But the sisters had a gift for storytelling, and many of their narrative poems profit by cleverly sustained suspense. "Ball" is a good example:

#### BALL.

"My good little fellow, don't throw your ball there,

You'll break neighbor's windows, I know;  
On the end of the house there is room, and to spare,

Go round, you can have a delightful game there,  
Without fearing for where you may throw."

Harry thought he might safely continue his play

With a little more care than before;  
So, heedless of all that his father could say,  
As soon as he saw he was out of the way  
Resolved to have fifty throws more.

Already as far as to forty he rose,  
And no mischief had happened at all;  
One more, and one more, he successfully  
throws,

But when, as he thought, just arrived at the  
close,

In popped his unfortunate ball.

"I'm sure that I thought, and I did not intend,"

Poor Harry was going to say;  
But soon came the glazier the window to mend,  
And both the bright shillings he wanted to  
spend

He had for his folly to pay.

When little folks think they know better than  
great,

And what is forbidden them, do,  
We must always expect to see, sooner or late,  
That such wise little fools have a similar fate,  
And that one in the fifty goes through.

A. T.

Children will listen to these little sermons because of their story interest, but they are, after all, commonplace verse. The nature lyrics, however, are genuinely pleasing when they are not too lengthy or marred by extraneous "lessons." "The Snowdrop" is one of the prettiest; "The Lark," although a bit too long, has charm; and every child enjoys "I like little pussy, her coat is so warm." But "Twinkle, twinkle, little star" is the enduring favorite. Children who hear it invariably learn the first verse at once.

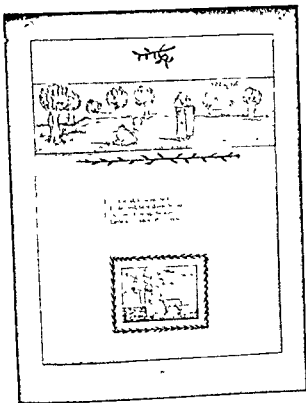
At their worst, Jane and Ann Taylor wrote long and pedantic verse-sermons for children, verses that are not worth salvaging today. At their best, they left children some pleasant little lyrics, a few of which are found in modern anthologies.

#### Kate Greenaway, 1846-1901

Under the Window

Marigold Garden

Like Jane and Ann Taylor, Kate Greenaway wrote undistinguished verse for children, but she did write with artless gaiety, and her illustrations have all the lyric grace the verses lack. Her balanced pages—decorated with flowers, fruits, merry children, and pleasant landscapes—possess a freshness and charm, and a kind of rhythmic grace that seem to lift the accompanying quatrains into the realm of genuine poetry. Without the pictures, the rhymes probably would not have survived,



From Kate Greenaway's *Under the Window*, Wornes (original in color, book 7 x 9½)

Even the title page and table of contents of *Under the Window* are decorated with colored woodcuts. This page in soft blues and greens is as gentle as "the little wind."

famous in every great city of Europe and of the United States.

Although Kate Greenaway's verses are often wooden and occasionally unchildlike, most of them have a gentle gaiety and exhibit a real understanding of children which at the time was rare; for example, this one from *Under the Window*:

In go-cart so tiny  
My sister I drew;  
And I've promised to draw her  
The wide world through.

We have not yet started—  
I own it with sorrow—  
Because our trip's always  
Put off till to-morrow.

It is typical Kate Greenaway—simple in language and idea, but with a spark of humor that brings a smile. When she moralizes, as she does frequently, it is not with the heavy hand of the Taylors but with sly humor. Here is a good example, also from *Under the Window*:

Yes, that's the girl that struts about,  
She's very proud,—so very proud!  
Her bow-wow's quite as proud as she:  
They both are very wrong to be  
So proud—so very proud.

See, Jane and Willy laugh at her,  
They say she's very proud!  
Says Jane, "My stars!—they're very silly;"  
"Indeed they are," cries little Willy,  
"To walk so stiff and proud."

The verses, together with the gentle caricature that illustrates them, are an excellent satire on pride as children see it.

The following poem might have come out of *Mother Goose*. Children like it for the contagious excitement of its lines.

but the two in combination constitute a unique contribution to children's books.

This modest and charming woman was born in London and worked there most of her days. The daughter of an artist, she began her own study of art as a matter of course. When she was still only twenty-two years old, her exhibitions of water colors were exciting favorable comment, but it was her Christmas cards which started her vogue. From the Christmas cards she turned to the illustration of children's books and was soon enjoying a tremendous popularity.

The tiny *Mother Goose* with the Greenaway pictures and decorations still remains one of the most exquisite editions of the old favorite. Then there are her illustrations for *Little Ann*, a collection of verses by Ann and Jane Taylor. The artist's popularity reached new heights with the publication of her own book of verses and drawings, *Under the Window* (1879), which is said to have sold 150,000 copies. This, together with her *Birthday Book*, *Marigold Garden*, and her *Almanacs*, brought her a large income and made her

Higgledy, piggledy! see how they run!  
Hopperty, popperty! what is the fun?  
Has the sun or the moon tumbled into the sea?  
What is the matter, now? Pray tell it me!

Higgledy, piggledy! how can I tell?  
Hopperty, popperty! hark to the bell!  
The rats and the mice even scamper away;  
Who can say what may not happen to-day?

"Susan Blue" (p. 190) is a little conversation piece—two small girls talking over a garden gate and wondering where to play. "Tommy was a silly boy" relates the amusing mishap of a small boy who thought he could fly. "Blue Shoes," "Shall I Sing!" "Under the Window," and "My House Is Red" are all pleasant, if uninspired, little verses. But one characteristic makes them important: they reflect a new consciousness of the real child and his everyday play. In the Greenaway books, we see and read about children racing and skipping, dancing to the piper's tune, flying kites, rolling hoops, chasing each other, going primly to tea, or quietly enjoying their own little red house—in short, real children.

School is over,  
Oh, what fun!  
Lessons finished,  
Play begun.

## Poets of the child's world of play

The poems of Kate Greenaway marked the transition from verse written for children's instruction to verse written for their entertainment, verse which records the child's play world from his point of view. While Greenaway sometimes moralized, she did so with a light touch and a glint of humor. She often stressed manners and all the prim proprieties of the Victorian Age, but she also recorded the bubbling spirits of children at play. "What is Tommy running for?" she asks, and sagely concludes that Tommy is running so that Jimmy can run after him. Reason enough for any child! Other poets caught this new point of view and began—with sensitive understanding and no ulterior purpose—to write a new kind of verse for and about children. Their poems

Who'll run fastest,  
You or I?  
Who'll laugh loudest?  
Let us try.

Grown-ups who had the Greenaway books as children usually discover that certain pages remain in the memory with all the distinctness of familiar faces. Take the "Five little sisters walking in a row," for example. Just over the poem there are five prim little girls in green pelisses, muffs, and large hats, and just beneath the poem there are five little pots of marigolds. This page makes poetry with or without the verses. Or look at the page containing

Little wind, blow on the hill-top,  
Little wind, blow down the plain;  
Little wind, blow up the sunshine,  
Little wind, blow off the rain.

Pictures and decorations are so simple a child might almost have painted them, but, together with the words, they evoke a momentary feeling of delight. The simple words combined with the soft landscapes, the picturesque figures, and the pleasing flower-and-fruit arrangements make these books a worth-while aesthetic experience for children.

reflect both the child's everyday world of active play and his inner world of imaginative play.

These poets of the everyday world are often close to the humorists and are equally beloved by the children. Sometimes, too, they give us lyric poetry of such distinction that they deserve to be grouped with the lyricists in the next chapter. On the whole, however, the poets discussed in the following pages are mainly concerned with the child's play world.

**Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-1894**  
*A Child's Garden of Verses*

The title "poet laureate of childhood" has often been bestowed upon Robert Louis Stevenson and until A. A. Milne appeared, there



was no real contender for it. Stevenson first captivated adult readers with his essays and fiction, then caught and held the affectionate regard of children with *A Child's Garden of Verses*. There was nothing comparable to these verses when they were written, no literary precedents, even though Stevenson himself said that the idea for his book came to him while he was glancing over one of Kate Greenaway's little books. *A Child's Garden of Verses* goes far beyond Greenaway at her best, both in its reflection of the child's point of view and in its poetry.

The facts of Stevenson's life are too well known to need much reviewing. There has been, however, far too much emphasis on the pathology of his life, and on his recurrent illnesses, and not enough emphasis on the indomitable spirit that kept him working and playing with tremendous energy and enjoyment to the very end of his short life.

He was always a frail child, to be sure, with a discouraging record of frequent coughs and colds and an almost fatal illness when he was only eight. The sullen, severe climate of Edinburgh could not have helped his health. One glimpse of that high, dark house in which he lived, with its walls touching the walls of the houses on either side, suggests still another reason why a delicate child needing the sun could grow no stronger there. Fortunately, Louis sometimes got away from it for visits to his grandfather Balfour's house at Colinton on the Water Leith. There he played outdoors with his cousins, and made friends with all the small creatures and with the garden blossoms he names so lovingly in his poem "The Flowers." There he discovered the "thrushes on the lawn," the lilacs, and the lawn itself which he later said was "a perfect goblet of sunshine." There, too, at the foot of the garden, flowed the dark brown river over its golden sand "with trees on either hand," just as he recalls it in "Where Go the Boats?"

Fortunately, too, the young Louis went on journeys with his father to visit the great lighthouses of the Scottish coast, many of

them built by the grandfather, Robert Stevenson, for whom he was named. These lighthouses and the daring feats of engineering which they represented captured the imagination of the child and helped his spirit grow robust. They influenced also his decision to follow the family profession of civil engineering, for which he studied. He finally gave it up for law because, although the adventurous outdoor life was greatly to his liking, he was not sufficiently rugged to stand it and he did not enjoy the technical study of engineering.

Perhaps these journeys with his father helped to establish the boy's lifelong passion for travel and outdoor life, and his capacity for enjoying the companionship of all kinds of people. In his youth he used to prowl "about the harbour sides, which," he said, "is the richest form of idling." He frequented the old inns and taverns of Edinburgh and later wrote, "I was the companion of seamen, chimney-sweeps, and thieves; my circle was being continually changed by the action of the police magistrate. I see now the little sanded kitchen where Velvet Coat (for such was the name I went by) has spent days together, generally in silence and making sonnets in a penny version book . . ."

Of his adult life more tales can be told than he himself ever wrote. The lawyer soon turned writer, and no author ever took his profession more earnestly nor worked at it more zealously. We know of his continual travels all over the world for health and for pleasure, and we know how his notebooks went with him everywhere and how there was never a journey that did not yield far notes to be used later in essays, poems, plays, novels, short stories, and letters.

In France he fell in love with an American, a Mrs. Osbourne, and followed her to California, where he married her in 1880. Their life together was remarkably happy, and Stevenson found himself in a kind of family partnership for writing. He dictated to his stepdaughter Isobel; he read everything he wrote to his wife, who was one of his best critics; and on Lloyd Osbourne, his stepson, he tried

out his boys' stories, chapter by chapter. *Treasure Island* grew and flourished by way of Lloyd's enjoyment, Lloyd's criticism, Lloyd's robust approval. "No women in the story, Lloyd's orders," wrote Stevenson. Again—"the trouble is to work it off without oaths. Buccaneers without oaths—bricks without straw. But youth and the fond parent have to be consulted. . . . It's awful fun boys' stories; you just indulge the pleasures of your heart; that's all; no trouble, no strain."

Stevenson's last four years were spent in Samoa, and no part of his brief life is more picturesque. He built himself a great house in the midst of a tropical estate, which he cultivated with astonishing success. He gathered round him a kind of feudal clan of natives who adored him and whom he protected like a kindly patriarch. He aided their deposed king, wrote a book in behalf of his native friends, hoping to help their cause in England, and was himself a sort of island king and judge.

When Stevenson died suddenly, his native friends came from all over the island to look upon the face of the dear friend they called "Tusitala," teller of tales. They brought their finest mats to honor the dead, they filled his room with their brightest flowers, and they carved a road up the great mountain to a peak where Stevenson had said he wished to lie. Sixty Samoans carried their friend up that precipitous road and left him forever in the land he loved. "Talofa, Tusitala," one of them said, "Sleep, Tusitala."

One episode should be related for the amusement of children and for the revelation it gives of the man who "was young so long." In the second volume of Stevenson's *Letters*, he tells about his encounter with little Annie H. Ide, who "was born, out of all reason, upon Christmas Day, and is therefore out of all justice denied the consolation and profit of a proper birthday." To Annie, Stevenson transferred his own birthday, in a document drawn up in a most elegant legal style and interspersed with characteristic Stevenson quips.

And considering that I, the said Robert Louis Stevenson, have attained an age when O, we never mention it, and that I have now no further use for a birthday of any description. . . .

*Have transferred, and do hereby transfer, to the said Annie H. Ide, all and whole my rights and privileges in the thirteenth day of November, formerly my birthday, now, hereby, and henceforth, the birthday of the said Annie H. Ide, to have, hold, exercise, and enjoy the same in the customary manner, by the sporting of fine raiment, eating of rich meats, and receipt of gifts, compliments, and copies of verse, according to the manner of our ancestors. . . .*

Finally, there are some paragraphs to the effect that if Annie neglects any of these conditions, the rights to the birthday shall be transferred to the President of the United States of America.

Little Annie Ide had the privilege of twice celebrating this birthday with its donor in Samoa. There each year the natives gave a great feast for Stevenson, and Annie occupied the seat of honor next to Stevenson. After his death, the birthday was faithfully celebrated each year according to his directions. Later, after Annie was grown up, married, and living in New York, the birthday was still celebrated by a proper feast and the reading of the famous document. These parties were duly recorded by the *New York Times* for many years. One President, William Howard Taft, remembered his rights, and during his administration wrote demanding proof that all the requirements had been carried out. Otherwise, he said, "as residuary legatee, the birthday now belonged to him." He did not get the birthday, but his request would certainly have delighted the blithe spirit of R. L. S.

*A Child's Garden of Verses* appeared in 1885 as *Penny Whistles*, with sixty-three poems and this fond dedication to Stevenson's childhood nurse: "To Alison Cunningham (From Her Boy)." Not all these poems are for children; a few of them are merely about children or are adult reminiscences of childhood. Such poems creep into almost

every collection of juvenile poetry but are nevertheless to be avoided; for example, Stevenson's "Keepsake Mill," "Whole Duty of Children," and the rarely included "To Any Reader" and "To Willie and Henrietta."

### Fidelity to child nature

With these exceptions, no careful reading of the poems can fail to leave you impressed with the author's genuine understanding of children. The opening poem, "Bed in Summer," is every child's complaint:

And does it not seem hard to you,  
When all the sky is clear and blue,  
And I should like so much to play,  
To have to go to bed by day?

His children get up shivering with cold on winter mornings; they yearn to travel; they discover the sea miraculously filling up their holes on the beach; they struggle with table manners; they have a deep respect for "System," an orderly world; they enjoy good days and bad ones, mostly good; they can't understand why the gardener doesn't want "to play at Indian wars" with them; they watch for the lamplighter; they wonder why they can't see the wind; and they enjoy a world of play and a world of the imagination as well. Children's interest in tiny things is found not only in "The Little Land" but over and over again in other verses. Here are real children, many-sided and with many interests.

### Dramatic play

Especially true to child life are the poems involving dramatic play. Imagination transfers a clothes basket into a boat. Climbing up in the cherry tree, the child glimpses not merely the next-door garden but foreign lands and even fairyland. This understanding of children might be expected of Stevenson. In an essay called "Child's Play," written long before the *Verses* appeared, he records his recollections of the young child's passion for dramatic play:

We grown people can tell ourselves a story  
. . . all the while sitting quietly by the fire or

lying prone in bed. This is exactly what a child cannot do, or does not do, at least, when he can find anything else. He works all with lay figures and stage properties. When his story comes to the fighting, he must rise, get something by way of a sword and have a set-to with a piece of furniture, until he is out of breath. . . . If his romance involves an accident upon a cliff, he must clamber in person about the chest of drawers and fall bodily upon the carpet, before his imagination is satisfied.

This explains the true-to-children quality of the verses which tell about "three of us aboard in the basket on the sea." In "A Good Play," the children explain:

We built a ship upon the stairs  
All made of the back-bedroom chairs,

The sick child's fleets go "all up and down among the sheets" in "The Land of Counterpane"; and in "The Land of Story Books," he has a forest adventure:

Now, with my little gun, I crawl  
All in the dark along the wall,  
And follow round the forest track  
Away behind the sofa back.

The poems bristle with the properties and imaginative transformations of that arch magician, the child of about four to seven years old.

### Group play

People have complained that this child of the *Verses* is a solitary child, and they have read into the poems some of the pathos of the sick Louis. But if you study these verses, you will find several children playing pirates in the "Pirate Story"; building ships together in "A Good Play"; being "mountaineers" in "The Hayloft"; crawling "through the breach in the wall of the garden" to "Keepsake Mill"; tramping round the village in the "Marching Song" with Johnnie, Willie, Peter, and "great commander Jane"; and in "Northwest Passage," facing together the "long black passage up to bed." These give us a fair proportion of other children and of social play. They emphasize also the healthy, normal play

activities of healthy children. Nothing of the invalid here!

### Night poems

Perhaps the largest group of poems under a single general classification is made up of those concerned with night. What an imaginative group it is, and sometimes scary too: "Young Night Thought," "My Bed Is a Boat," "The Land of Story-Books," "Night and Day," "The Moon," "Windy Nights," "Shadow March," "The Land of Nod," "Escape at Bedtime," "Good-Night," and "In Port." Of these, "Escape at Bedtime" is one of the most interesting because of its glimpse of starry skies.

#### ESCAPE AT BEDTIME

The lights from the parlour and kitchen shone  
out  
Through the blinds and the windows and bars;  
And high overhead and all moving about,  
There were thousands of millions of stars.  
There ne'er were such thousands of leaves on  
a tree,  
Nor of people in church or the Park,  
As the crowds of the stars that looked down  
upon me,  
And that glistened and winked in the Dark.  
The Dog, and the Plough, and the Hunter, and  
all,  
And the star of the sailor, and Mars,  
These shone in the sky, and the pail by the  
wall  
Would be half full of water and stars.  
They saw me at last, and they chased me with  
cries,  
And they soon had me packed into bed;  
But the glory kept shining bright in my eyes,  
And the stars going round in my head.

#### Musical qualities

There are two poems in this night group which are also notable for their rhythm. "Shadow March" has as perfect marching time as any music by Sousa, but it is an eerie, frightening march of bogies and shadows, not to be used before the children are seven or eight years old and stout enough to stand it.

Less scary and still finer is that pounding gallop called

### WINDY NIGHTS

Whenever the moon and stars are set,  
Whenever the wind is high,\*  
All night long in the dark and wet,  
A man goes riding by.\*  
Late in the night when the fires are out,  
Why does he gallop and gallop about?\*

Whenever the trees are crying aloud,  
And ships are tossed at sea,\*  
By, on the highway, low and loud,  
By at the gallop goes he,\*  
By at the gallop he goes, and then  
By he comes back at the gallop again.\*

Keep on saying "the gallop again, the gallop again, by he comes back at the gallop again," and you will feel yourself galloping, too. Notice in the starred lines the silent beat after the last word exactly like a rest in music. This probably calls for a little explanation. Read the poem aloud, tapping the meter with your finger, just as a metronome beats out the time of music. You discover the silent beat immediately, and you discover also how it enhances the galloping rhythm, even though you were unconscious of it. "Windy Nights" is a masterly bit of music-with-words, fine enough for older children to say in verse choirs and for any child to enjoy recalling when, snug in his bed, he listens to a great storm that sets the trees to "crying aloud."

Another fine example of the use of rhythm to suggest the subject is "From a Railway Carriage." Notice that the verse has the tempo and the driving speed of the train.

Faster than fairies, faster than witches,  
Bridges and houses, hedges and ditches;  
And charging along like troops in a battle,  
All through the meadows the horses and cattle:  
All of the sights of the hill and the plain  
Fly as thick as driving rain;  
And ever again in the wink of an eye,  
Painted stations whistle by.

These examples of rhythm illustrate another of the outstanding qualities in Stevenson's *Child's Garden of Verses*: the poems are

markedly lyrical. Of course, numbers of them have been set to music, but they sing anyway, without benefit of notes. Take the concluding line of "A Good Boy": "And hear the thrushes singing in the lilacs round the lawn." It does sing, doesn't it? Or read the familiar

#### SINGING

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings  
And nests among the trees;  
The sailor sings of ropes and things  
In ships upon the seas.

The children sing in far Japan,  
The children sing in Spain;  
The organ with the organ man  
Is singing in the rain.

Or listen to the refrain in

#### THE WIND

I saw you toss the kites on high  
And blow the birds about the sky;  
And all around I heard you pass,  
Like ladies' skirts across the grass—  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

I saw the different things you did,  
But always you yourself you hid.  
I felt you push, I heard you call,  
I could not see yourself at all—  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

O you that are so strong and cold,  
O blower, are you young or old?  
Are you a beast of field and tree,  
Or just a stronger child than me?  
O wind, a-blowing all day long,  
O wind, that sings so loud a song!

Go through page after page of these poems and you'll find them singing in your memory with their own melody. One of the most lyrical of them all is

#### WHERE GO THE BOATS?

Dark brown is the river,  
Golden is the sand.  
It flows along forever,  
With trees on either hand.  
Green leaves a-floating,  
Castles of the foam,

Boats of mine a-boating—  
Where will all come home?

On goes the river  
And out past the mill,  
Away down the valley,  
Away down the hill.

Away down the river,  
A hundred miles or more,  
Other little children  
Shall bring my boats ashore.

Notice the slow, smooth-flowing melody of the first two verses, like the flow of the river. In the third verse, the repetition of "Away" gives an impetus to the lines as if the current were really flowing faster and carrying the boats farther until, abruptly, as if in a little eddy, the boats come to anchor in the last two lines. Except that the poem has no gaiety, the smooth glide of the lines suggests the flowing melody of "The Moldau," by Smetana.

Stevenson was evidently fond of the poem pattern which seems to begin close at hand and go farther and farther away. He uses it again effectively in

#### FOREIGN LANDS

Up into the cherry tree  
Who should climb but little me?  
I held the trunk with both my hands  
And looked abroad on foreign lands.

I saw the next-door garden lie,  
Adorned with flowers before my eye,  
And many pleasant places more  
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass  
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;  
The dusty roads go up and down,  
With people tramping in to town.

If I could find a higher tree,  
Farther and farther I should see,  
To where the grown-up river slips  
Into the sea among the ships,

To where the roads on either hand  
Lead onward into fairy land,  
Where all the children dine at five,  
And all the playthings come alive.

In this, the child's vision is limited at first to the next-door gardens, but it widens until he

glimpses, imaginatively, the sea and the magic road to fairyland. Even for the youngest, Stevenson uses this pattern in the brief

#### RAIN

The rain is raining all around,  
It falls on field and tree,  
It rains on the umbrellas here,  
And on the ships at sea.

Although teachers and mothers who were raised on *A Child's Garden of Verses* may feel that the verses are overfamiliar, they must not forget that these poems are new to each generation of children. "The Cow," "My Shadow," "The Swing," "Winter-time," and "Time to Rise," in addition to the verses already quoted, are perennial favorites, and children should not miss them. New poets of childhood may make their contributions, but Robert Louis Stevenson has left to young children a legacy of small lyrics, just their size.

#### Eleanor Farjeon, 1881-

Eleanor Farjeon's  
Poems for Children

The poetry of Eleanor Farjeon (p. 121) cuts across any classification which could be devised. She writes skillful nonsense verse, clever in form and content. Her lyrics are tender and beautiful. But, on the whole, she belongs with the poets reviewed in this chapter because her verses reflect a sure knowledge of the child's world and wonderment.

Surely no child ever grew up in a more amusing household than little "Nellie" Farjeon enjoyed. For a picture of childhood in a

family which was as brilliant as it was unusual, read her *Portrait of a Family*.

Although the four Farjeon children grew up on friendly terms with many of London's distinguished people, none seemed as wonderful to them as their gentle mother and their gay, irrepressible father. The mother was the daughter of America's most beloved actor, Joseph Jefferson of Rip Van Winkle fame. From the Jeffersons, Eleanor thinks, the four children inherited their love of music, which was strong in all of them and developed into a profession with Harry, the oldest. Certainly pretty "Maggie" Jefferson gave them a good start, singing for them all the American songs which she had grown up with and which they soon learned to know and love as well as she did.

Nellie adored her father, a popular novelist of his day and the friend of all the notables in the world of the theater, music, literature, and art. When Nellie was about ten years old, her father began the pleasant custom of presenting each child with a book after Sunday dinner. Nellie's first one was *In Memoriam*, and she remembers her father telling her about Tennyson and reading her parts of the poem. He read aloud much poetry, and of all the poets Shakespeare was their favorite.

When Eleanor Farjeon began to write, she always took her manuscripts to her father's

Illustration by Pelagie Doane for *A Child's Garden of Verses*  
by Robert Louis Stevenson, Garden City, 1942  
(original in color, book 8½ x 8¼)

Children like to look at this picture  
and tell how many things they see that show  
them the wind is blowing. Pelagie Doane's  
clear bright colors and appealing children  
always make her books popular.



study, pushed them under the door, and then ran away. "I had a stomach-ache till he came and told me if he liked it," she writes. "He never kept me waiting. Even if he was writing his own stories, he stopped at once to look at my last poem, and came straight to the Nursery to talk it over with me. He taught me how to correct proofs and to be particular in the clearness of my 'copy' for the printers, long before I had any printers to consider." Once, when she was ill, Nellie wrote a twenty-thousand-word story, sent it down to her father, and then waited in bed fearful and anxious to learn his opinion. When he came, he exclaimed, "I have hopes of you, Nell! I have hopes of you!" and she knew complete satisfaction. The story might not win a prize but she was on her way. Her father thought she might be a writer!

After the death of their father, the children spent one year in the United States with their grandfather, Joseph Jefferson. Then Harry received an appointment to the faculty of the Royal Academy of Music in London, and Eleanor returned with him. Her first book was published shortly after she returned to London. It was the amusing *Nursery Rhymes of London Town*, for which she wrote her own music. This was followed by the lively historical nonsense, *Kings and Queens*, by her brother and herself, and from then on she has written prolifically, both prose and poetry.

At her best, Eleanor Farjeon's poems for children are skillfully written. She is a good craftsman, having practiced every form of English poetry from sonnets to blank verse. Her rhythms are often as lively as a dance; her meters and rhyme schemes are varied and interesting; and her subject matter ranges from sheer nonsense through the everyday activities of everyday children to fairy lore and fantasy.

Unfortunately, the quality of her poems is uneven, for some of her published verse is relatively mediocre when judged by her best. She is not, for instance, so adroit at describing the modern child's everyday activities as A. A. Milne and Dorothy Aldis, although such

poems as "Bedtime," "Breakfast," and "What I've Been Doing" are well liked by the children.

### Imagination and the everyday world

But the moment she turns imaginative, something wonderful happens. Take, for example, that curious and lovely night poem, whose very title arrests attention:

#### THE NIGHT WILL NEVER STAY

The night will never stay,  
The night will still go by,  
Though with a million stars  
You pin it to the sky.  
Though you bind it with the blowing wind  
And buckle it with the moon,  
The night will slip away  
Like sorrow or a tune.

Mr. Milne may give us "Hoppity" and Mrs. Aldis, "Hiding," but it takes Eleanor Farjeon to turn an ordinary night into something as perishable and precious as life itself. This poem might well give a child his first sense of time, rushing irresistibly along in a pattern of starry nights that will not stand still. Not that the child can so translate the poem, but he will say it and say it again, because both the idea and the words are as haunting as a melody. In simpler but still highly imaginative style are her companion poems, "Boys' Names" and "Girls' Names" (p. 217). Children like the sound of these verses, and the surprise endings amuse them.

The lovely "Over the Garden Wall," which describes a ball mysteriously thrown over the wall by unseen hands, gives a simple episode both beauty and significance. This seems to be the secret of Eleanor Farjeon's magic: when she illumines everyday happenings with the light of her imagination, they take on a new and glowing significance. "Our Mother's Tunes," "Blow the Stars Home," "The Smoke," "The Bonfire," and "The Song of the Fir" are all examples of this magic, and so, too, in a lighter vein, is "House Coming Down," one of the best of her city poems. This curious spectacle of a house in the proc-

ess of demolition has been captured to perfection in her lively verses.

Of her fairy poems, "City Under Water" is perhaps the loveliest and the most usable for children. There are not many of these, but they are invariably good fairy lore and well written.

### Nature poems

Nature poems occur throughout the books. Of these, children like especially "The King-fisher," "A Dragon-Fly," "Heigh-Ho, April," and the favorite, "Mrs. Peck-Pigeon." Read it aloud and notice how the words and lines of this poem suggest, ever so subtly, the funny little bobbing, teetering gait of the pigeon pecking for crumbs:

#### MRS. PECK-PIGEON

Mrs. Peck-Pigeon  
Is picking for bread,  
Bob-bob-bob  
Goes her little round head.  
Tame as a pussy-cat  
In the street,  
Step-step-step  
Go her little red feet.  
With her little red feet  
And her little round head,  
Mrs. Peck Pigeon  
Goes picking for bread.

### Christmas poems

All of Eleanor Farjeon's poetry merits attention. You will find many treasures that the children will include among their special favorites. But one of her most valuable contributions is her Christmas poetry, which is unique in its variety and spirit. Sometimes the poems have the hushed reverential mood of a Christmas hymn; sometimes they are gay and rollicking. Often she uses contrast to point ever so gently the lesson of Christmas, as in "For Christmas Day." "The Shepherd and the King" is filled with tender joy, and young children will like the spirited "In the Week When Christmas Comes." Keep these poems in mind, for there are no other poems so true to the Christmas spirit, so

tender, imaginative, and moving. Here are two in contrasting mood:

#### THE CHILDREN'S CAROL

Here we come again, again, and here we come again!

Christmas is a single pearl swinging on a chain,  
Christmas is a single flower in a barren wood,  
Christmas is a single sail on the salty flood,  
Christmas is a single star in the empty sky,  
Christmas is a single song sung for charity.

Here we come again, again, to sing to you again,

Give a single penny that we may not sing in vain.

#### SHALL I TO THE BYRE GO DOWN?

Shall I to the byre go down  
Where the stalled oxen are?  
Or shall I climb the mountain's crown  
To see the rising star?  
Or shall I walk the golden floor  
Where the King's feast is spread?  
Or shall I seek the poor man's door  
And ask to break his bread?

It matters not. Go where you will,  
Kneel down in cattle stall,  
Climb up the cold and starlit hill,  
Enter in hut or hall,  
To the warm fireside give your cheek,  
Or turn it to the snow,  
It matters not; the One you seek  
You'll find where'er you go.

His sandal-sole is on the earth,  
His head is in the sky,  
His voice is in the baby's mirth  
And in the old man's sigh,  
His shadow falls across the sea,  
His breath is in the wind,  
His tears with all who grieve left He,  
His heart with all who sinned.

Whether you share the poor man's mite  
Or taste the king's own fare,  
He whom you go to seek to-night  
Will meet you everywhere;  
For He is where the cattle wend,  
And where the planets shine—  
Lo, He is in your eyes! Oh friend,  
Stand still, and look in mine.

Her "Prayer for Little Things" is often used



And then we sat back on our feet  
And wondered for a little bit.  
And we forgot to dig our wells  
A while, and tried to answer it.

And while we tried to find it out,  
He puckered in a little wad,  
And then he stretched himself again  
And went back home inside the clod.



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Illustration by F. D. Bedford for *Under the Tree* by Elizabeth Madox Roberts, Viking, 1930 (book 6 x 9 1/4)

*Judged by the large, colored illustrations of some children's books, this picture may seem a negligible example. Yet every significant detail of the poem is pictured in this small sketch. Check with the story told in "The Worm," and see how admirable the interpretation is.*

at Christmas but is actually timeless in its appeal. If Eleanor Farjeon had written nothing else, her Christmas songs alone would rank high in the poetry that children love and learn as effortlessly as they breathe.

#### Elizabeth Madox Roberts, 1886-1941 *Under the Tree*

Elizabeth Madox Roberts was born and grew up in Perryville, Kentucky, where her forebears had settled in Daniel Boone's time. Certainly from her novels we know that she must have been steeped from childhood in the balladry, the folklore, and the history of her state. From her poems we guess that she must have had an unusually happy childhood with the other children in her family—enjoying the normal village experiences of picnics, church, lessons, and the glorious treat of the circus.

From 1917 to 1921 she attended the University of Chicago and graduated not only with Phi Beta Kappa but with the McLaugh-

lin prize for essay and the Fisk prize for poetry. The poetry was later published in *Under the Tree*, about which Louis Untermeyer has remarked, "few American lyricists have made so successful a debut." After her graduation from the university, she lived in New York for a while and began writing her novels. Later she retired to her own Kentucky and continued her work there. She won several poetry prizes while writing her novels, but she is best known as the author of *The Time of Man*, *Jingling in the Wind*, *The Great Meadow*, and other stories of Kentucky. A year before her death, a second volume of poems, *Song in the Meadow*, appeared.

One reviewer, J. Donald Adams, has said of Elizabeth Madox Roberts: "Everything she writes bears the unmistakable mark of her highly individual gifts; nothing she has ever done could possibly be mistaken for the work of another writer."

#### Child's point of view

This is particularly true of her one book of poems for children, which is unlike any other juvenile poetry. It has a deceptive air of simplicity that gives the unwary reader no immediate clues to the artistry which makes these poems emotionally satisfying and full of everyday enchantment. "The Worm" will serve as an example:

Dickie found a broken spade  
And said he'd dig himself a well;  
And then Charles took a piece of tin,  
And I was digging with a shell.

Then Will said he would dig one too.  
We shaped them out and made them wide,  
And I dug up a piece of clod  
That had a little worm inside.

We watched him pucker up himself  
And stretch himself to walk away.  
He tried to go inside the dirt,  
But Dickie made him wait and stay.

His shining skin was soft and wet.  
I poked him once to see him squirm.  
And then Will said, "I wonder if  
He knows that he's a worm."

And then we sat back on our feet  
And wondered for a little bit.  
And we forgot to dig our wells  
A while, and tried to answer it.

And while we tried to find it out,  
He puckered in a little wad,  
And then he stretched himself again  
And went back home inside the clod.

Here is a narrative as direct as prose, with no "proud words," no fancies, no ethereal theme—just worm and children. The children are digging; but, notice that they are digging with a broken spade, a piece of tin, and a shell—tools so characteristic of children that this first verse startles the adult and is accepted as a matter of course by the child. Then the worm distracts them from their original plan of digging a well, and they experiment with it for a while until a strange idea makes them forget their experiments. They sit back and wonder if "he knows that he's a worm"—an idea that only a child would think of. The ability to think, see, and feel as a child is the first characteristic of Elizabeth Madox Roberts that strikes you as unerringly right and true. She makes even the language seem much as the child might talk, although only an artist could choose words as descriptive as those about the worm: "pucker up himself," "stretch himself to walk away," "his shining skin was soft and wet," and finally

"he puckered in a little wad." These are masterly descriptive phrases, and yet they sound as if the child might have spoken them. So in "The Cornfield," "Mumps," "Father's Story," "The Picnic," "The Butterbean Tent," and a dozen others, you encounter a real child telling seriously of what he sees, feels, and does.

### Child wonder and delight

The Roberts child ruminates about things, wonders, and has several scares, but she is never fairy-conscious or full of those delicate whimsies so frequently found in British juveniles. This child has a wholesome earthiness and a healthy identification with and delight in nature. She enjoys milking time; she makes herself a little house under

#### THE BUTTERBEAN TENT

All through the garden I went and went,  
And I walked in under the butterbean tent.

The poles leaned up like a good tepee  
And made a nice little house for me.

I had a hard brown clod for a seat,  
And all outside was cool green street.

A little green worm and a butterfly  
And a cricket-like thing that could hop went by.

Hidden away there were flocks and flocks  
Of bugs that could go like little clocks.

Such a good day it was when I spent  
A long, long while in the butterbean tent.

She has all the fun of wading in "The Branch." She listens to the "Water Noises" that seem to say, "And do you think? And do you think?" She grows suddenly joyous over the "Crescent Moon," and the verse skips as ecstatically as the children:

#### CRESCENT MOON

And Dick said, "Look what I have found!"  
And when we saw we danced around,  
And made our feet just tip the ground.

We skipped our toes and sang, "Oh-lo.  
Oh who, oh who, oh what do you know?  
Oh-who, oh hi, oh loo, kee-lo!"

We clapped our hands and sang, "Oh-ce!"

It made us jump and laugh to see  
The little new moon above the tree.

She shares her shelter from a "Little Rain"  
with a shivery chicken and a ladybug. She is  
haunted by stars, amazed at the miracle of a

#### FIREFLY (A Song)

A little light is going by,  
Is going up to see the sky,  
A little light with wings.

I never could have thought of it,  
To have a little bug all lit  
And made to go on wings.

And she is struck by the odd three-layer-cake  
arrangement of the universe:

#### THE PEOPLE

The ants are walking under the ground,  
And the pigeons are flying over the steeple,  
And in between are the people.

A very tidy arrangement when you come to  
think of it!

Then there is talk, back and forth, between  
the child and her world. She listens to the  
hens going to roost and speaking their "little  
asking words." Twice a bush speaks to her,  
quite naturally, just a passing word. Around  
sleep time there is a gay little brown jug that  
talks, and in broad daylight an old horse, in  
the poem called "Horse," gives her a piece of  
his mind and sends her on her way:

*He didn't talk out with his mouth;  
He didn't talk with words or noise.  
The talk was there along his nose;  
It seemed and then it was.*

*He said the day was hot and slow,  
And he said he didn't like the flies;  
They made him have to shake his skin,  
And they got drowned in his eyes . . .*

*And then he shut his eyes again.  
As still as they had been before.  
He said for me to run along  
And not to bother him any more.*

So children interpret their dog, or cat, in their  
earnest and commendable efforts to reach the

animal's point of view. This poem is horse-  
talk indeed, and a child's interpretation too.  
Read the whole six stanzas, and you can fairly  
hear the snort with which horse asserts "I'm  
horse," he said, 'that's what!'"

#### People

The poems are full of pleasant people and  
reflect the child's interest not only in other  
children, but in the grown-ups at home and  
abroad. Father fills the little girl's mug at  
milking time and sings or tells stories to all  
the children. Mother sends them on picnics  
and corrects their manners. There are brothers:  
Clarence, Charles, and the twins, Will  
and Dick. In "Christmas Morning" the child  
recalls the details of the Nativity in terms of  
her own mother and baby John—as naive and  
lovely an interpretation as you could find!  
Sundry other relatives are remembered in the  
poems. The townspeople vary from pretty  
"Miss Kate-Marie," the Sunday school teacher,  
and another "Beautiful Lady," to Mr. Penny-  
baker, who makes faces when he sings bass,  
and the notable Mr. Wells:

#### MR. WELLS

*On Sunday morning, then he comes  
To church, and everybody smells  
The blacking and the toilet soap  
And camphor balls from Mr. Wells.*

*He wears his whiskers in a bunch,  
And wears his glasses on his head.  
I mustn't call him Old Man Wells—  
No matter—that's what Father said.*

*And when the little blacking smells  
And camphor balls and soap begin,  
I do not have to look to know  
That Mr. Wells is coming in.*

The intense curious interest that children feel  
toward the strange antics of grown-ups is re-  
flected in poem after poem and is summarized  
in the amusing "People Going By."

#### Fidelity to child nature

Reading and rereading these poems, you re-  
alize their integrity. No word, no line is  
dressed up or prettified to sound "cute." Cute-

ness afflicts much modern verse for children and is indeed the curse of juvenile poetry. Here in these poems by Elizabeth Madox Roberts is complete fidelity to child nature. The poems are grave, simple, and full of the unconscious beauty of a child's narrative when he is moved to tell you earnestly of something he enjoys. You can live with these poems, use them year after year, and never exhaust their richness. No grown-up can read them without knowing much more about children when he finishes, and no child can hear them without feeling a kinship with that child who likes to play with wiggletails, smell the aromatic herbs of fennel, and eat cherry pie, but who occasionally suffers from fears no less intense from being imaginary.

#### STRANGE TREE

Away beyond the Jarboe house  
I saw a different kind of tree.  
Its trunk was old and large and bent,  
And I could feel it look at me.

The road was going on and on  
Beyond to reach some other place.  
I saw a tree that looked at me,  
And yet it did not have a face.

It looked at me with all its limbs;  
It looked at me with all its bark.  
The yellow wrinkles on its sides  
Were bent and dark.

And then I ran to get away,  
But when I stopped to turn and see,  
The tree was bending to the side  
And leaning out to look at me.

It would seem wrong to close without quoting "The Hens," "The Rabbit," and half a dozen other favorites—except that *Under the Tree* is a book to be read in its entirety. In it a sensitive and gifted artist has revealed with rare fidelity the "long, long thoughts" of childhood.

Winifred Welles, 1893-1939  
Skipping Along Alone

Winifred Welles (Mrs. Harold Shearer) was born into an old Connecticut family. In *The Lost Landscape* she tells about her family his-

tory and her childhood in Norwich Town, where she grew up, married, and had one son. Her little boy was the inspiration for her single book of poems for children, *Skipping Along Alone* (1931). It has been out of print for so long that most of the favorites are in anthologies, but it is a pity to lose the book, with Marguerite Davis' lively pictures.

In a first grade, the children watched a cecropia moth come out of its cocoon, slowly fan its wings dry, and then make its first flight to a nearby plant. The children were quiet and breathless from the first stirring of life in the dead, dusty-looking shell. It is exactly this mood of wonder and hushed expectancy that Winifred Welles has caught in her poem about the luna moth. Later in the day, after all the facts about moths had been discussed and disposed of, the teacher read this poem:

#### GREEN MOTTH

The night the green moth came for me,  
A creamy moon poured down the hill,  
The meadow seemed a silver sea,  
Small pearls were hung in every tree,  
And all so still, so still—

He floated in on my white bed,  
A strange and soundless fellow.  
I saw the horns wave on his head,  
He stepped across my pillow  
In tiny ermine boots, and spread  
His cape of green and yellow.

He came so close that I could see  
His golden eyes, and sweet and chill,  
His faint breath wavered over me.  
"Come Child, my Beautiful," said he,  
And all so still, so still—

Again stillness descended upon the children; the teacher read the poem a second time, and then she let them go. The next day and many times thereafter they asked for the poem: "Read about the moth *so still*."

#### Imaginative adventures

This poem about the child and the moth is one of the finest examples of imaginative adventures in the book. It is also an example

of that blend of realism and fantasy which we shall find again in Walter de la Mare. Although "Green Moth" is an exceptionally accurate description of a luna moth, this is not merely a garden moth but a mysterious visitant summoning the child to some fairy world. The lines are beautiful in sound and mood, and the children invariably whisper with the teacher the lines, "And all so still, so still—." "The Angel in the Apple Tree" is a beautiful poem which always suggests the young William Blake seeing his flock of glistening angels in a tree. They must have been "lovely, silver Persons" too. "Behind the Waterfall" is a fantasy in which the child follows a mysterious old woman straight through the cascade and catches a fleeting glimpse of the silvery world of water fairies. The flight "over stones all green and glossy" is in a rapid, breathless tempo that comes to a pause only when the old woman's touch opens "a wide door in the wall."

#### BEHIND THE WATERFALL

A little old woman  
In a thin white shawl,  
Stepped straight through the column  
Of the silver waterfall,  
As if the fall of water  
Were not anything at all.  
I saw her crook her finger,  
I heard her sweetly call.  
Over stones all green and glossy  
I fled and did not fall;  
I ran along the river  
And through the waterfall,  
And that heavy curve of water  
Never hindered me at all.  
The little old woman  
In the thin white shawl  
Took my hand and laughed and led me  
Down a cool, still hall,  
Between two rows of pillars  
That were glistening and tall.  
At her finger's tap swung open  
A wide door in the wall,  
And I saw the crystal city  
That's behind the waterfall.

These three poems, "Green Moth," "The Angel in the Apple Tree," and "Behind the

Waterfall," put a spell upon the listener that grows out of the melody of sound and the mystery of words and ideas.

#### Fairies and fancies

The fairies of Winifred Welles are a lively and unconventional crew. There is the scolding, squinting "Stocking Fairy," who resides in the holes of your socks and has temper tantrums until you mend her *in*. There is the "Fairy Under Glass," with her small face "all puckered up to scream." There are the bouncing, pouncing fairies who go hunting sandfleas for an "Elfin Feast," and of course there are the surly old gnome, Minim, and his patient mice servants in "Minim and the Two Mice." All the fairy poems are amusing, but the "Stocking Fairy" is the children's favorite:

#### STOCKING FAIRY

In a hole of the heel of an old brown stocking,  
A little old Fairy sits rocking and rocking,  
And scolding and pointing and squeaking and  
squinting,  
Brown as a nut, a bright eye glinting,  
She tugs at a thread, she drags up a needle,  
She stamps and she shrills, she commences to  
wheedle,  
To whine of the cold, in a fine gust of temper  
She beats on my thumb, and then with a  
whimper  
She sulks in her shawl, she says I've forgotten  
I promised to make her a lattice of cotton,  
A soft, woven window, cozy yet airy,  
Where she could sit rocking and peeking—  
Hush, Fairy,  
Tush, Fairy, sit gently, look sweetly,  
I'll do what I said, now, and close you in neatly.

Closely akin to the spirit of the fairy poems are the whimsical fancies of the child in "Run-away Fountain" and "Things Left Alone." In the first poem the child imagines the fountain is alive and mischievously chasing him down the street. In "Things Left Alone" he asks, "What do the chairs say when we are gone?" and imagines that just as he steps into the house he catches the smothered laughter of dishes settling into their places and nudging each other "to keep mum as to where they



STOCKING FAIRY

In a hole of the heel of an old brown stocking,  
A little old Fairy was rocking and rocking,  
And winding and pointing and spinning and spinning,  
Threw as a hat, a bright eye gleaming,  
She tugs at a thread, she drags up a handle,  
She bumps and she shrills, she murmures to whistles,  
To whom of the odd, as a fine gust of temper,  
She beats on my trunk, and then with a whisper,  
She melts in her shawl, she says I've forgotten  
I promised to make her a lattice of cotton,  
A well, woe's wonder, very dry air,  
When she could sit rocking and perking—Hush, Fairy,  
Tush, Fairy, sit gently, look sweetly,  
I'll do what I can, now, and show you at beauty.

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Illustration by Marguerite Davis for *Skippping Along Alone*  
by Winifred Welles, Macmillan, 1931 (book 6½ x 8½)

*You do not need Winifred Welles' poem to tell  
you that this crabby old fairy is furious.  
Notice the child-size stocking. Children enjoy all  
the sewing details of this illustration.*

A narrow greyhound for a fog,  
A wolfhound strange and white,  
With a tail like a silver feather  
To run with in the night,  
When snow is still, and winter stars are  
bright.

In the fall I'd like to see  
In answer to my whistle,  
A golden spaniel look at me.  
But best of all for rain  
A terrier, hairy as a thistle,  
To trot with fine disdain  
Beside me down the soaked, sweet smelling  
lane.

have been." "Hoppergrass: His Funeral" describes the elaborate burial of a grasshopper by flowers, birds, and insects.

### Just any day

A goodly number of Winifred Welles' poems are about the child's everyday interests, described with rare perception and charm. "Skippping Along Alone" celebrates the child's fun in skipping along the beach in "moisty weather," all alone except for the seabirds. "Hollyhock Lady" is a conversation between "black-eyed Myrtilla" and "pig-tailed Priscilla" about that weighty problem all children have to solve—"what let's do to-day?" There are the imaginative speculations of "Questions for a New Moon," and the amusing speculations of "Curious Something," in which the child wonders "if I could smell smells with my ears." The modern child, who knows not merely "dogs" but a dozen or so particular breeds, likes:

### DOGS AND WEATHER

I'd like a different dog  
For every kind of weather—

These examples perhaps suggest the fresh subject matter of Winifred Welles' poems. They are like the poems of Walter de la Mare in their remarkable grace, but they are closer in content to the child's range of experience and fancy. And like most poems, they must be read aloud if their melody and their gay, varied rhythms are to be appreciated fully. Winifred Welles had deep insight into the child's everyday world, and her gay, unhackneyed verses surprise and delight children and adults alike.

### Rachel Field, 1894-1942

The Pointed People  
A Little Book of Days  
Taxis and Toadstools

Rachel Field must have been a delightful human being, judging from the amusing account of her early years she herself has written for *The Junior Book of Authors*, and from the varied tributes paid her in the Memorial edition of the *Horn Book* (July-August 1942). These give you the impression of a warm, vivid personality, full of exuberance, loving people and the outdoor world.

She worked at top speed, as if from some inner compulsion, and gave to her books the vigor and integrity that were hers. With curly red hair and bright eyes, she was "just like Christmas," said Laura Benét, a fellow poet.

Rachel Field was born in the lovely old town of Stockbridge, Massachusetts. There she started school and, she confides, did so poorly that she dreaded the days when report cards were due. But teachers and townspeople remember her as a gifted child, absorbed by dramatics and playing well such contrasted characters as Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* and the title rôle of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*. She began to write poetry at an early age, but mathematics was forever a mystery and a terror. In high school in Springfield, Massachusetts, she won an essay prize and determined to go to college if she could avoid mathematics. Radcliffe accepted her as a special student, and throughout four happy years she took all the English she could get, both literature and composition. Eventually she became a member of the famous English 47, George P. Baker's "Dramatic Workshop," which turned out so many notable playwrights. In this class she wrote her successful play, *Three Pills in a Bottle*, which has been performed ever since in little theaters all over the country.

After Radcliffe, Rachel Field settled in New York to begin the serious business of writing. She worked for five years at making condensations of novels for motion-picture companies, work which she thought was good for her own composition since it gave her practice in brevity. Her *Six Plays* were published in 1924, and that same year the Yale University Press published her poems for children, *The Pointed People*. These attracted favorable attention even though they appeared at the same time that A. A. Milne's *When We Were Very Young* was creating a sensation. Rachel Field illustrated her book with her own cutout silhouettes, and in 1926 did the decorations for her second book of poems, *Taxis and Toadstools*. This clever title signified her own way of life: eight

months in New York City, with taxis, street-vendors, and skyscrapers; four months on an island off the coast of Maine with fogs, wood-strawberries, and toadstools.

From 1924 to 1942, in a period of only eighteen years, she published some thirty-six books, many of which she herself illustrated. She ended with two popular novels for adults. It is said that her husband, George Pederson, led her to make this change from juveniles. It is pleasant to think that boys and girls recognized her ability when they bestowed upon *Calico Bush* (p. 434), the historical novel she wrote for them, their wholehearted approbation. *Hitty*, which is the story of a hundred-year-old doll, won the Newbery Award, but Rachel Field's finest prose contribution to children's literature is the unusual and powerful *Calico Bush*.

The last six years of her sunny life must have been among the happiest. After her marriage she went to California with her husband and there she wrote the adult novel *All This, and Heaven Too*, which was made into a successful moving picture. In California, when their daughter Hannah was only two-and-a-half years old, Rachel Field died. In the closing paragraph of her last novel, *And Now Tomorrow*, she writes, "Once I might have faltered before such a transplanting. But that was yesterday. Now I am ready for tomorrow."

#### A child's sense of wonder

Of Rachel Field's three books of poems for children—*The Pointed People*, *A Little Book of Days*, and *Taxis and Toadstools*—it is the third that children like best. Here are poems as direct and forthright as their author. They think and speak in terms of children, never talking down, never pretentious, but investing the everyday sights of city and country with the child's own sense of wonder and delight.

An inland child once said with awe that she was going to spend the summer on an island. "A real island with the sea all around;

just think, with sea on every side of us!" she breathed, recalling:

If once you have slept on an island  
You'll never be quite the same.

How could Rachel Field know so unerringly the child's sense of the miracle of islands? Over and over, she catches the curious wonderment of children. She shows a child turning back to look at the china dog with the "sad unblinking eye" and wishing for magic words to bring him to life; or a child wondering what the ring of the doorbell may bring forth; or feeling "strange and shivery" when a parrot looks at him with his "bead-bright eyes"; or wondering if skyscrapers ever want to lie down and never get up! These are authentic child-thoughts, and the children respond to their integrity with spontaneous pleasure.

### A child's kinship with nature

Out-of-doors, the children of her poems voice that curious kinship with birds, beasts, and growing things that is part of the magic of childhood. Some people, like Rachel Field herself, keep this all their lives. In "Barefoot Days" the child is "glad in every toe," and the first verse is alive with the feeling of cool grass and curly fern under small, naked feet. Her children lie down in meadow grass and expect to hear the bluebells ring. They go to the woods for wild strawberries and forget that there is anything else in the world to do but "fill my hands and eat." They think that perhaps if they sit still long enough—the whole summer through—they may take root in the ground with the bay and the juniper trees. They understand the wild creatures, and when they see "The Dancing Bear," they know at once something is wrong, for his eyes look bewildered "like a child's lost in the woods at night."

### The child and fairies

Rachel Field includes only eight fairy poems in her *Taxis and Toadstools*, but they make a colorful and convincing group. For the most

part, Americans do not deal with fairies successfully. They are no part of the native tradition, and Americans approach them self-consciously. Rachel Field is an exception. Her few fairy poems are simple, sincere, and in good folklore tradition. "The Visitor" is a delightful story-poem that should not be missed at the Halloween season:

### THE VISITOR

Feather-footed and swift as a mouse  
An elfin gentleman came to our house;  
Knocked his wee brown knuckles upon our door;  
Bowed till his peaked cap swept the floor.  
His shiny eyes blinked bright at me  
As he asked for bread and a sup of tea,  
"And plenty of honey, please," he said.  
"For I'm fond of honey on my bread!"  
Cross-legged he sat, with never a word,  
But the old black kettle sang like a bird;  
The red geranium burst in bloom  
With the blaze of firelight in the room,  
The china rattled on every shelf,  
And the broom danced merrily all by itself.  
Quick to the pantry then I ran  
For to serve that elfin gentleman.  
I brewed him tea, I brought him bread  
With clover honey thickly spread.  
One sip he took, one Elf in bite,  
But his ears they twitched with sheer delight.  
He smacked his lips and he smiled at me.  
"May good luck follow you, child!" said he.  
He circled me round like a gay green flame  
Before he was off the way he came,  
Leaving me there in the kitchen dim,  
Sighing and staring after him,  
With the fire low and the tea grown cold,  
And the moon through the window sharp and  
old,  
Only before me—instead of honey,  
That bread was golden with thick-spread money!

"The Green Fiddler" is not so childlike, but both "The Secret Land" and "The Elf Tree" are deeply imaginative and seem to touch the ancient roots of genuine fairy lore.

### The city child

When you try to make a collection of children's poems about the city, you soon discover how few and inadequate they are.



Rachel Field's unique contribution to children's verse is perhaps the three groups of city poems in *Taxis and Toodstooks*, called "People," "Taxis and Thoroughfares," and "Stores and Storekeepers." Of course the city child likes automobiles, just as a country child likes horses and cattle. A ten-year-old boy of the city streets used to recite Rachel Field's "Taxis" with a shine in his eyes and a gusto that seemed to say, "Now listen to this. Here's something!"

#### TAXIS

Ho, for taxis green or blue,  
Hi, for taxis red,  
They roll along the Avenue  
Like spools of colored thread!

*Jack-o'-Lantern yellow,  
Orange as the moon,  
Greener than the greenest grass  
Ever grew in June,  
Gayly striped or checked in squares,  
Wheels that twinkle bright,  
Don't you think that taxis make  
A very pleasant sight?  
Taxis shiny in the rain,  
Scudding through the snow,  
Taxis flashing back the sun  
Waiting in a row.*

Ho, for taxis red and green,  
Hi, for taxis blue,  
I wouldn't be a private car  
In sober black, would you?

So the city child likes "Good Green Bus," "At the Theater," "The Florist Shop," "The Animal Store," and the favorite "Skyscrapers," with its humorous suggestion that tall buildings may sometimes wish to lie down.

One of the pleasantest poems in this group is "City Rain." The first verse is so clear a picture that children always want to illustrate it. The cozy feeling in the second verse is heightened by the rainy sound of that next-to-the-last line, with its humming *n* sounds:

#### CITY RAIN

Rain in the city!  
I love to see it fall  
Slantwise where the buildings crowd

Red brick and all.  
Streets of shiny wetness  
Where the taxis go,  
With people and umbrellas all  
Bobbing to and fro.

Rain in the city!  
I love to hear it drip  
When I am cosy in my room  
Snug as any ship,  
With toys spread on the table,  
With a picture book or two,  
And the rain like a rumbling tune that sings  
Through everything I do.

The city child likes venders, too, and notices that at least two seasons come to the city—ushered in not so much by the changes in nature that occur in the country, but by the sudden appearance of certain seasonal tradesmen: the "Flower-Cart Man" in the spring, and the "Chestnut Stands" on the first frosty morning.

#### The child looks at people

The child who speaks in the first person throughout these poems likes people and watches them with friendly keenness even as Rachel Field must have done. Interest in people is characteristic of children, and it is recorded in these poems with sensitive perception. When the child sees "Sandwich Men," there is a recognition of something wrong. The men are "dreary round the eye" with something about them that makes her "want to cry."

And this is not an unchildlike observation. Children study lame people or anyone who deviates from the normal with a passionate intentness that seems bent upon finding out why, at all costs. So this child perceives "The Blind Man" on the corner smiling to himself. She notices the keen blue eyes of sea captains, "trimmed round with lines," and how "Old Man Cutter" and his house seem to look alike. Florists are different from other storekeepers, for they have "a sort of fragrance of the mind."

Rachel Field's poetry never attains the power and sureness of her best prose, but the complete absence of artificiality or juvenile

cuteness in these poems and her sincere reproduction of a child's point of view commend them to both children and adults.

**Dorothy Aldis, 1897-**  
All Together;  
A Child's Treasury of Verse

Chicago is the home of Mrs. Aldis, whose four books of verse—*Everything and Anything; Here, There and Everywhere; Hop, Skip and Jump*, and *Before Things Happen*—have been collected into one volume, *All Together*. Her verses are popular with children six to eight years old, although her verse patterns, compared with Milne's, are neither varied nor interesting, and she rarely achieves anything unusual either in form or content. Yet she makes a sure appeal to young children. Her strength lies in her knowledge of the small child's everyday interests, his play, and his observations. Mrs. Aldis' verse-children keep pets, have brothers and sisters, wonder about their hands and feet, celebrate Fourth of July, and enjoy a happy relationship with their parents. "Hiding," which is the most popular verse she ever wrote and a prime favorite with six- and seven-year-olds, is beloved in part because it reflects a parent-child relationship that every child longs for. Here are a mother and father playing with their child, entering into his make-believe with proper gravity and no condescension:

**HIDING**

I'm hiding, I'm hiding,  
And no one knows where;  
For all they can see is my  
Toes and my hair.

And I just heard my father  
Say to my mother—



"But, darling, he must be  
Somewhere or other;

Have you looked in the inkwell?"  
And mother said, "Where?"  
"In the inkwell," said father. But  
I was not there.

Then "Wait!" cried my mother—  
"I think that I see  
Him under the carpet." But  
It was not me.

"Inside the mirror's  
A pretty good place,"  
Said father and looked, but saw  
Only his face.

"We've hunted," sighed mother,  
"As hard as we could  
And I *am* so afraid that we've  
Lost him for good."

Then I laughed out aloud  
And I wiggled my toes  
And father said—"Look, dear,  
I wonder if those

Toes could be Benny's.  
There are ten of them. See?"  
And they *were* so surprised to find  
Out it was me!

The humor of these little verses is mild and consists chiefly of surprise endings. The books owe their appeal to the fact that we find in them real children, simply and unostentatiously recorded by a mother who catches their point of view.

**Harry Behn, 1898-**  
The Little Hill  
Windy Morning  
The Wizard in the Wall

Harry Behn's three small books of verse, attractively decorated by the author, speak to young children, five to nine, with lyric charm and unusual variety. There are a few nonsense jingles like "Mr. Pyme," "Dr. Windikin," "Shopping Spree," and the lively

Illustration from Harry Behn's *Windy Morning*,  
Harcourt, 1953 (book 5 x 7½, picture 1¾ x 1)

### TEA PARTY

Mister Beedle Baddlebug,  
Don't bandle up in your hoodlebag  
Or mumble in your jumblejug,  
Now eat your nummy tiffletag  
Or I will never invite you  
To tea again with me. Shoo!

These nonsense rhymes are in the minority, and there are comparatively few fairy poems. Particularly pleasing are the imaginative "The Merry-Go-On," "The Fairy and the Bird," the philosophical "The Wizard in the Well," the humorous "The Gnome," and the gentle, wistful "Undine's Garden." In quite a different mood of conscious make-believe is the amusing weathervane poem called

### THE GNOME

I saw a gnome  
As plain as plain  
Sitting on top  
Of a weathervane.

He was dressed like a crow  
In silky black feathers,  
And there he sat watching  
All kinds of weathers.

He talked like a crow too,  
Caw caw caw,  
When he told me exactly  
What he saw,

Snow to the north of him  
Sun to the south,  
And he spoke with a beaky  
Kind of a mouth.

But he wasn't a crow,  
That was plain as plain  
'Cause crows never sit  
On a weathervane.

What I saw was simply  
A usual gnome  
Looking things over  
On his way home.

There are many verses about the child's play world, both real and imaginative. "The New Little Boy" is refreshingly antisocial.

"Picnic by the Sea" is a child's view of the queer grown-ups who sit sunning themselves when there are so many wonders to be explored. "Hallowe'en" is a particularly shivery celebration of that favorite festival and is delightful for verse choirs to speak. "Pirates," "The Kite," "Growing Up," "Visitors," "Teddy Bear," "The Old Gray Goose," and "The Surprise" are all good examples of this group of verses, which will be especially popular with children.

Mr. Behn's unique contribution is found in those poems where he is helping the child to look at his everyday experiences with the eyes of the spirit. Notice the philosophy in

### OTHERS

Even though it's raining  
I don't wish it wouldn't.  
That would be like saying  
I think it shouldn't.  
I'd rather be out playing  
Than sitting hours and hours  
Watching rain falling  
In drips and drops and showers,  
But what about the robins?  
What about the flowers?

Read aloud "Early Awake," "Trees," "Spring," "Spring Rain," "The Little Hill," "Lesson," and you will feel the reassurance, the acceptance, and the happy peace that emanate from these and many other poems. "This Happy Day" begins with a child's cheerful greeting to the sun on a bright new day and concludes with a note of thanksgiving. Without any religious pronouncements, these are religious poems in which the poet helps children to savor gratefully their everyday experiences, the sheer magic of being alive. One of the finest of these is "Gardens." The young child may not understand its full meaning without a little explanation, but it is a reverent expression of the mystery of creation.

### GARDENS

Clouds are flowers  
Around the sun.



I'd like to be a pea,  
Would you?

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The summer breeze  
Hums with bees.

One drop of dew  
Holds only me,

But there is one  
That holds the sun

And clouds and flowers  
And everyone.

This quiet note of reassurance is characteristic of Mr. Behn's poetry for children.

#### Aileen Fisher and Zhenya Gay

Other writers who have helped young children take a keener pleasure in their everyday

#### Regional reflections of the United States

Two poets speak for and about the United States, their poetry reflecting different geographic areas and sharply contrasting moods. Mary Austin writes of the Southwest, and introduces us to some of the mysticism of the desert Indians. Carl Sandburg uses the lazy vernacular of the Midwestern farmer or speaks with the violence and roughness of city workers in steel mills and factories. Both

Illustration from Zhenya Gay's *Jingle Jangle*, Viking, 1953 (book 6 x 9¼, picture 5 x 7)

No one who looks at this can miss the feeling of skittish exuberance in the upsurging lines.

world are Aileen Fisher and Zhenya Gay. *Up the Windy Hill* has many of the verses from Miss Fisher's *The Coffee-Pot Face*, with some new ones added. Such poems as "It's April!" "New Moon," "Rain Song," and "And I Sang Too" have a pleasant lyric quality. "A Lion Atop a Tree" is a remarkably true observation of the vehement protests uttered by a small, displeased squirrel. Many of the verses lapse into commonplace language and verse form, but children often enjoy the subject matter.

Zhenya Gay, like Kate Greenaway, is primarily an artist. Her verses are pedestrian, but the pictures that accompany them are so full of zestful action and reveal so true an observation of the capering grace of young children and animals that to use her books is a joyous experience. *Jingle Jangle* is the best of them so far. Through its pages she helps the child to touch, taste, smell, see, hear, and enjoy the outdoor world: "Night things are soft and loud," "The world is full of wonderful smells," "Going barefoot is lots of fun." She also does some really giddy nonsense verses, and throughout her books the pictures bring oh's and ah's of delight from children and grown-ups. Her books are for the three- to six-year-olds, but the sevens and eights enjoy them, too.

poets contribute something unique and distinctly American to children's poetry.

#### Mary Austin, 1868-1934

##### The Children Sing in the Far West

The unusual poems in *The Children Sing in the Far West* are now to be found only in large libraries and scattered here and there through anthologies. The book should never

have gone out of print, for nowhere else do we find the flora and fauna of the West and the chants of the desert Indians as Mary Austin recorded them in this choice little book. Here are prairie dogs, coyotes, pumas, rules, mesas, piñon nuts, cactus, and mesquite of the Far West. If people east of the Mississippi are bewildered by these new words, they can then understand how meaningless some of the descriptions of the Eastern landscape must seem to a desert child.

Mary Austin was born and grew up in Illinois and was twenty years old before she moved west. There she fell in love with the new country and began a lifelong study of the region. California first, then New Mexico, and finally the whole of the Southwest absorbed her. The varied racial backgrounds of the people, the Spanish legends, the Indians with their ancient customs and religion—she loved them all and wrote about them with appreciative understanding.

### Descriptions of the Southwest

For a brief period in her life she taught school, and because she could find no poetry about that part of the country, she began to write with and for her children some of the things they talked about and loved. It is not difficult to find these poems—"Texas Trains and Trails," for instance, and "A Feller I Know," "A Song of Western Men," and probably the little joke called "Grizzly Bear." These are all amusing but are not characteristic of the best she has written. *Children Sing in the Far West* also contains many poems which are too long, too descriptive, or too subtle for children. Mary Austin was a mystic, and much of her philosophy is beyond the range of youngsters. Nevertheless she has given children some beautiful poetry of permanent value.

"The Sandhill Crane" is a dramatic picture of the stately long-legged bird, whose solemn walk brings terror and destruction to the small creatures in the tules. The first four lines and the last in each stanza describe the tempo of the big bird "solemnly stalking."

The fifth, sixth, and seventh lines set the mood of terror and suggest the small beasts' fears and their scuttling to shelter and silence.

### THE SANDHILL CRANE

Whenever the days are cool and clear  
The sandhill crane goes walking  
Across the field by the flashing weir  
Slowly, solemnly stalking.  
The little frogs in the tules hear  
And jump for their lives when he comes near,  
The minnows scuttle away in fear,  
When the sandhill crane goes walking.  
The field folk know if he comes that way,  
Slowly, solemnly stalking,  
There is danger and death in the least delay  
When the sandhill crane goes walking.  
The chipmunks stop in the midst of their play,  
The gophers hide in their holes away  
And hush, oh, hush! the field mice say,  
When the sandhill crane goes walking.

"At Carmel" is perhaps the finest description in the collection but will appeal to adults far more than to children. They, on the other hand, enjoy "Seven Rhyming Riddles," all of which, without achieving distinction, have a certain happy phrasing.

### Indian lore and wisdom

The finest poems in the book are her interpretations of the tribal wisdom of the Indians or her translations of their chants. These have a peculiarly moving quality and are of genuine importance, both as poetry and as Indian lore. There are three poems called "Charms"—"For Walking," "For Keeping Friends Faithful," and

### FOR GOING A-HUNTING

O my brothers of the wilderness,  
My little brothers,  
For my necessities  
I am about to kill you!  
May the Master of Life who made you  
In the form of the quarry  
That the children may be fed,  
Speedily provide you  
Another house;  
So there may be peace  
Between me and thy spirit.

Here is the old Indian wisdom of killing only for food, never for the mere sport of killing. Mary Austin's own mysticism and her sympathetic understanding of the Indian's religion make "Morning Prayer" and "Evening Prayer" particularly fine.

This small book with its rich variety is the only collection of children's poems that speaks the language of the Far West. Perhaps the children may prefer Mary Austin at her second best, in the rollicking "Texas Trains and Trails" style—but teachers should slip in some of her finest and most characteristic poems now and then, and at least a few of the children will respond. She speaks not only for Indians but for every child in the Chippewa "A Song of Greatness." At her best, Mary Austin transcends local color and writes with universal significance.

### Carl Sandburg, 1878-

#### Early Moon

Carl Sandburg (p. 93) was almost forty years old before he began to be recognized as a writer. Now he is the author of what is certainly one of the greatest biographies of Abraham Lincoln, *The Prairie Years* and *The War Years*, and he occupies a secure position in American letters. To children he has given *Rootabaga Stories* and *Rootabaga Pigeons*, fantastic nonsense with a bit of homely philosophy underlying their humor; *Abe Lincoln Grows Up* (p. 534), the story of Lincoln's boyhood and youth, reprinted from his longer work on Lincoln; and, finally, *Early Moon*, a selection from all his poems of those that seem adapted to children and young people.

When Sandburg was thirteen, his schooling was apparently over and he went to work. His occupations were numerous and carried him all through the Midwest and eventually to Puerto Rico. As porter, dishwasher, trucker, driver, scene-shifter, harvest hand, and soldier in the Spanish-American War, he learned to know workingmen and people of all kinds. He saw the bitter side of poverty and brutality, along with the nobility and

vision that make life in the United States the curious composite that it is. After the Spanish-American war was over, he worked his way through college and went into newspaper work. He was with the *Chicago Daily News* for many years, and some of his poems first appeared in that paper. The publication of his *Chicago Poems* in 1915 created a sensation and brought down upon his head a fair balance of hostility and enthusiasm. Critics seemed to feel either that poetry was going rapidly downhill or that here was another Walt Whitman, a prophet of a new day. The poems were as lusty and gusty as the city they celebrated. His satire was robust, and he used strong, hard words.

When Carl Sandburg began to write his poems, he used the vernacular of the streets and the farms. This vernacular seems natural today, but at the time his poems appeared it shocked many people and he was accused of unnecessary roughness. That criticism is hardly just, for Sandburg has a great range of both subject matter and style. In describing the cities of belching smokestacks, steel furnaces, and stockyards, he does use harsh words and lines and cadences that fall like hammer blows. But when he speaks of vast prairies or of "sleepy Henry Hackerman hoeing" or of milk on a baby's chin, his words are appropriately serene, his tempos slow-moving and easy. In short, he adapts his style to his theme. Probably because his harsher poems are among his more powerful ones, people remember them and think of Sandburg more often in his sterner mood. In children's literature this male strength is not without value, for feminine voices and feminine ideas tend to dominate the education of American children. The masculine voice of Carl Sandburg contributes a much-needed vigor and realism.

Although many of Sandburg's poems are too mature and too concerned with sociological problems to be suitable for children, many of them are well worth trying with eleven- and twelve-year-olds and older. Boys especially like them, and most older children are amused by the humorous "Phizzog."

## PHIZZOG

This face you got,  
Thus here phizzog you carry around,  
You never picked it out for yourself, at all, at  
all,—did you?  
This here phizzog—somebody handed it to you  
—am I right?  
Somebody said, "Here's yours, now go see what  
you can do with it."  
Somebody slipped it to you and it was like a  
package marked:  
"No goods exchanged after being taken away"—  
This face you got.

They can also appreciate "Prayers of Steel" with some preliminary explanations. Even the ironical "Southern Pacific" is a possibility with the oldest. Its biting brevity is exceedingly effective. Easier for them to understand are "Psalm of Those Who Go Forth Before Daylight" (to which children could make some additions), "Again?" (about the Woolworth building), "Buffalo Dusk" (good for Western units), "People Who Must" (about a steeplejack), "Manual System" (about a switchboard operator), and the fine "To Beachey, 1912" (which might be about any aviator of any year):

### TO BEACHEY, 1912

Riding against the east,  
A veering, steady shadow  
Purrs the motor-call  
Of the man-bird  
Ready with the death-laughter  
In his throat

## Modern poets of rhyme and reason

Reasonable Rhymesters are writers who have no great poetic gifts but do have a pleasant facility for composing verses about the child's everyday affairs. Some of them are frankly intent upon preparing verses to fit the school curriculum. Others are preoccupied with the sensory impressions of the very young child. They are consciously trying to cast his "big, buzzing, booming confusion" of a world into words that buzz and boom also. Still others are trying to interpret for the child his everyday routines such as eating,

And in his heart always  
The love of the big blue beyond.

Only a man,  
A far fleck of shadow on the east,  
Sitting at ease  
With his hands on a wheel  
And around him the large gray wings.  
Hold him, great soft wings,  
Keep and deal kindly, O wings,  
With the cool, calm shadow at the wheel.

"Theme in Yellow" is a pleasant little Halloween poem for the primary children; "Fog" is in so many anthologies it needs no introduction here; and "Weeds," "Splinter," and "Laughing Corn" make a good contrast to the city poems. There are many others you will wish to use.

No teacher should miss Carl Sandburg's introduction to *Early Moon*, in which he discusses how poetry is written and how children's creative efforts should be treated. He has given some good advice to the children themselves in "Primer Lesson." When you read this to children, let them talk it over. It is good advice for anyone and reveals Sandburg's point of view.

### PRIMER LESSON

Look out how you use proud words.  
When you let proud words go, it is not easy to  
call them back.  
They wear long boots, hard boots; they walk off  
proud; they can't hear you calling—  
Look out how you use proud words.

going to bed, getting dressed, or his city environment of elevators, subways, and airplanes.

All these rhymesters are extremely serious about their mission of interpreting the child's world to him in sensory-motor terms, or of having a poem ready for every experience. Sometimes, indeed, they suggest the earnestness of the didactic writers, only they are teaching not manners and morals but the modern social world. If their verses do little to advance the child's feeling for words that

sing, they often provide good language experiences. By underscoring familiar places, objects, and experiences and by celebrating timely events, they contribute both to the child's understanding and to his enjoyment. But let's not deceive ourselves; poetry is more than subject matter. Poetry dances and sings—it is a heartbeat, a sudden lift of the spirit, a quickened feeling. There are more words that sing, more rollicking humor, more spice and variety on a few pages of *Mother Goose* or in a few poems of Eleanor Farjeon or Laura Richards than in all the books of these Reasonable Rhymesters put together. Their best work is found in modern anthologies; so it will not be necessary to discuss them in any detail.

If Annette Wynne had written less, she might have written better. Two fat volumes, *All Through the Year* and *For Days and Days*, were, she says, "written and arranged calendarwise for school entertainment." Needless to say, the books are in constant circulation—school entertainments are long and the time for running down poems is brief. So be it Thanksgiving or Mother's Day, Annette Wynne can be depended upon to have written a poem for that day. Fortunately, along with myriads of commonplace little rhymes, her books contain a few charming ones. For instance, the three poems on Columbus, in *For Days and Days*, are all interesting. Certainly the idea carried by "Indian Children" is an arresting one—seven- and eight-year-olds are always set to wondering by it.

#### INDIAN CHILDREN

Where we walk to school each day  
Indian children used to play—  
All about our native land,  
Where the shops and houses stand,  
And the trees were very tall,  
And there were no streets at all,  
Not a church and not a steeple—  
Only woods and Indian people.  
Only wigwams on the ground,  
And at night bears prowling round—  
What a different place to-day  
Where we live and work and play!

Throughout the two books of Annette Wynne runs a sincerely religious vein that makes them popular sources for Sunday school or home use. They are not, however, inspired poetry.

James S. Tippet's numerous small books, just pocket size, make an immediate appeal to the young child. For him the author is interpreting the skyscraper environment of a large city—elevators, endless stairways, switchboard girls, the subway—all the complexities of New York City experienced through the eyes of an inquiring child. Some of this subject matter in *I Live in a City* might be incomprehensible to a suburban child of another large city, but some of the verses make a general appeal, for instance

#### THE PARK

I'm glad that I  
Live near a park  
For in the winter  
After dark  
The park lights shine  
As bright and still  
As dandelions  
On a hill.

*I Go A-Traveling* opens with a chant which the child himself might have spoken. If a child had chanted such words, we should accept them as interesting speech play, but we should not call the result poetry, nor read it back to the child as such. Mr. Tippet's virtue is that he is never arch. His directness and sincerity are admirable. His books are records of a modern child's curiosities, his response to his environment, both in the city and in the country. As language records, these books have their place.

Dorothy Walter Baruch has made a distinguished contribution to our understanding of child psychology in such books as her *Parents and Children Go to School*. In her verse for young children she began, as every good psychologist should, with the child himself. She recorded his questions, comments, protests, and chants. These she later cast into free verse, edited, and gave back



to the children as their stories. When she herself began to write verses for children, she followed similar patterns—free verse, in the child's own mode of speech, with many "choo chooings" and "pit pattings." In her *I Like Machinery* this is carried to extremes. One machine goes "shwirrrsh," the next one "zquzz wissh," while still another "whirrs," "zwooshshs," or "badumps." Vacuum cleaners, lawn mowers, electric fans, interpreted only in terms of their sounds, do not add up to much more than a collection of oddly assorted consonants. Neither exact expression, nor clear ideas, nor poetry emerge from such experiments. Yet at her best, Dorothy Baruch has given children some delightful verse. A perennial favorite is "The Merry-Go-Round." In this poem, her sensory impression of the carrousel, first gathering speed and then gradually slowing down to a stop, is admirably realized in words and line lengths. This looks deceptively simple, but it is a small but perfect bit of art. Young children love it.

#### THE MERRY-GO-ROUND

I climbed up on the merry-go-round,  
And it went round and round.

I climbed up on a big brown horse,  
And it went up and down.

Around and round  
And up and down,  
Around and round  
And up and down.

I sat high up  
On a big brown horse  
And rode around  
On the merry-go-round  
And rode around

On the merry-go-round  
I rode around  
On the merry-go-round  
Around  
And round  
And  
Round.

Less musical but equally effective is the odd little pattern from *I Like Automobiles*:

#### STOP—GO

Automobiles

In

a

row

Wait to go

While the signal says:

STOP

Bells ring

Tingaling

Red light's gone!

Green light's on!

Horns blow!

And the row

Starts

to

GO

Here is a kind of play with words which is fresh and childlike. It represents Mrs. Baruch at her best.

Poetry of the child's everyday world began primly enough with the intent to teach manners and morals in a form that would be remembered. To this end, Isaac Watts wrote his little verse-sermons against quarreling and fighting and other misbehavior. The Taylor sisters also rhymed their advice on the evils of being meddlesome or dirty or idle or disobedient, but their verses reflected more awareness of the real child, and occasionally a little lyric slipped in with no moral attached. This awareness of the living child became still more evident in Kate Greenaway's mildly humorous verses. She showed children charting, skipping, rolling hoops, and generally enjoying life.

But it was not until Robert Louis Stevenson wrote *A Child's Garden of Verses* that the poetry of the child's world completely forgot to moralize. Stevenson's verses are imaginative and musical, with an easy flowing quality that is often genuinely lyrical. His was a sure knowledge of the child's world of both everyday and imaginative play, a knowledge which his poems reflect.

Eleanor Farjeon's poetry sings and sparkles with wit and melody. While her poems cover

a great variety of subject matter, her Christmas poems will be remembered longest.

Rachel Field, a poet sensitive to people and in love with both the city and the country, writes about them through a child's mind and heart. Her city poems are an unusual group and are particularly cherished by urban children. But all her verse has an integrity and directness that children value. This is equally true of the poems of Elizabeth Madox Roberts, who shows us a child with brothers and sisters and lots of relatives—a small-town child who knows all the inhabitants and has plenty of time for observing them. Miss Roberts' poems are close to the child's own outlook on the world—direct, plain, candid.

Winifred Welles begins with the child's everyday world but carries her readers into a world where fact and fancy merge. Harry Behn speaks to the inner ear of the spirit with quiet serenity, transforming the child's everyday experiences into something more. The singing words of these two poets make a transition between the poets of the child's world and the lyricists of the next chapter.

Carl Sandburg and Mary Austin speak to the child of his own country, the former for

the Midwest, the latter for the great Southwest. Both are difficult writers for children, with only a few poems which they accept wholeheartedly, but the best work of these two poets is too good to be overlooked.

Mrs. Aldis, writing for children five to seven, makes pleasant little verses of the modern child's play, full of surprise endings and understandable humor.

Finally, after beginning with rhymes of manners and morals, this group concludes with rhymes of reason; the circle is complete. A deep concern with subject matter, with the interpretation of the modern machine age for the child, has given rise to a school of writers who start with realistic subjects and industriously cast them into rhyme or free verse. Annette Wynne, James Tippet, and Dorothy Baruch have produced an occasional celebration of the timely or the memorable which has a simple grace. On the whole, however, their output does not reach the level of Stevenson, Farjeon, Field, Roberts, and Welles, either in content or in poetic value. With time so short and children so eager, let's search for the best in poetry. And what is best the listening ear can help determine.



Illustration from Eve Garnett's  
A Book of Seasons, Bentley, 1953 (book 7¼ x 9¼)

*In the very softness of Eve Garnett's pencil sketches of the outdoor world, she conveys something of its charm for outdoor children. These two, relaxed and comfortable, are enjoying their favorite books under a favorite tree. An enviable combination!*

Children begin as young as two years old to play with words and respond to their sounds, "Pickle-lillie, pickle-lillie," chants one child, savoring the ear-tickling *l*'s with evident enjoyment. "Upsey-daisy," sings another with broad smiles. Such responses to the humor of sounds are fairly common. But when a four-year-old repeated over and over in a soft, sad little voice, "Far, far away, far, far away!" everyone was surprised because none of the nursery-school stories or poems had included such a phrase or such a mood. Although he was ordinarily a rambunctious little boy, he spoke the words wistfully. He never added to the phrase, but throughout the day he would murmur, always in the

same sad tone, "Far, far away!"<sup>1</sup> So children are caught by the charm of words and phrases, and without knowing why, they respond to

the mood invoked by the words. In some such accidental way, children's taste for lyric poetry may begin.

## Response to mood and melody

Reading aloud to a group of nursery-school children, Miss Jean Wheeler<sup>2</sup> tried Coleridge's "Kubla Khan":

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan  
A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea.

and a two-year-old remarked sagely, "Know what? That's nice." Of course he did not know what it meant, and of course its "niceness" for him consisted in the flow of words so beautiful and hypnotic to hear that even understanding adults can scarcely attend to their meaning. "But this is all wrong," say the earnest pedagogues. "It is dangerous to encourage children to respond to words they do not understand. Words should convey meaning." Of course they should, but not all meaning is factual. Sometimes words induce a mood or feeling which cannot be wholly accounted for by their literal meanings but results from their sound, combined with their associative meaning. Certainly the two-year-old sensed the quiet beauty of "Kubla Khan" as truly as the most analytical critic.

Seven-year-olds who had enjoyed Milne's poetry and other humorous verse heard for the first time a group of poems by Walter de la Mare, among them "The Horseman." It was read to them twice with no comment.

I heard a horseman  
Ride over the hill;  
The moon shone clear,  
The night was still;  
His helm was silver,  
And pale was he;  
And the horse he rode  
Was of ivory.

After the second reading a boy spoke slowly, "That makes me think of knights . . . it has a sort of nice sound." When these children had an opportunity to receive a copy of the poems they had enjoyed the most and wished to hear again, "The Horseman" was one of their most frequent choices. Why? Its meaning is open to debate, but its mood and its feeling of quiet and mystery somehow reach young children, partly because of the associative qualities of such words as *horseman*, *still*, *helm*, and *ivory* but mostly because of the poem's gently melodic sound.

These examples and this discussion are not intended to imply that lyric poetry is characteristically obscure in meaning or that its sound is of more importance than its meaning. But they are intended to emphasize the fact that lyric poetry, if fully appreciated, usually evokes a feeling-response. Children who have had the good fortune to hear a poem that gives them shivers up their backbones or a swift upsurging flood of elation or a sense of quietness and peace are discovering the joy of good poetry.

But in the early stages of a child's explorations of lyric poetry, adults should proceed cautiously. Beware of dull analysis or of catechizing the child, for fear of killing his pleasure in his new-found treasures. Later, when his enjoyment of lyric poetry is securely established, then, perhaps, he can profit by a detailed study of a particular poem. Certainly the elementary school finds him still too young and too insecure in his tastes to risk spoiling his happy explorations by premature analysis. Instead, the adult's responsibility is to find for the child those rich treasures of authentic lyric poetry that suit his emotional range and evoke a feeling-response—poems so lovely in sound that they will speak to the inner ear and to the spirit and imagination

<sup>1</sup>Marie L. Allen, *A Pocketful of Rhymes*.  
<sup>2</sup>Jean Wheeler, "Poetry for Children," *Childhood Education*, January 1930.

of the child. He will then begin to enjoy lyric poetry even though he remains primarily devoted to nonsense jingles.

Where shall we look for such treasures? Everywhere, because the tradition of beauty is a bright stream that flows through many countries and many periods. It is fortunate for us that the stream of English lyric poetry flows brighter and clearer than that of almost any other country. From this great body of verse, the child will appropriate certain poems that suit him. From the songs of Shakespeare he will take some, if we let him hear them often enough, and from modern poets he will choose other favorites. The child's tastes are catholic, but his lyric sense is keener than people have been inclined to believe. Of course he enjoys and needs much poetry that stops short of greatness, but his tastes will grow if he is introduced day after day to fine bits of lyric poetry along with his beloved Steven-

son and Milne. Singing words have a way of haunting the memory like a melody. A child does not know consciously that he likes the sound or pattern of a poem until he has heard it often enough for it to be tucked away in his mind, as a whole or even in bits. Then, as he says those singing words over to himself, he begins to understand them. He re-creates them as he says them, and they are really his.

That is what should happen to the poems discussed in this chapter. They must be heard over and over, casually and without pressure or catechizing, but often enough so that they begin to sing in the children's memories. If you yourself think some of them are hard to understand or like, it is because you are reading them with your eyes only. *Read them aloud and listen to others read them, for these are songs and their melodies must be heard if they are to be enjoyed.*

## Singers of songs

William Shakespeare, William Blake, and Christina Rossetti are all associated in our minds with song. Different as they were, they had one gift in common, the gift of gay, childlike song. Their works are as sharply contrasted as their lives, yet children enjoy the singing of all three.

### William Shakespeare, 1564-1616

The great English dramatist is one of those poets who, although writing for adults, have songs that children enjoy. Children hearing his songs under no unhappy compulsions, such as analyzing or memorizing them, soon know them by heart, and the words sing in their heads like a popular tune. "Under the greenwood tree," from *As You Like It*, seems to belong with Robin Hood.

#### THE GREENWOOD TREE

Under the greenwood tree  
Who loves to lie with me,  
And tune his merry note  
Unto the sweet bird's throat,

Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
Here shall he see  
No enemy

But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,  
And loves to live i' the sun,  
Seeking the food he eats  
And pleased with what he gets,

Come hither, come hither, come hither:  
Here shall he see  
No enemy

But winter and rough weather.

"Jog on, jog on," from *The Winter's Tale* (p. 211) is a good march for any excursion of children. Ariel's song, "Where the bee sucks," from *The Tempest*, is a pleasant fairy poem:

#### ARIEL'S SONG

Where the bee sucks, there suck I:  
In a cowslip's bell I lie;  
There I couch when owls do cry.  
On the bat's back I do fly  
After summer merrily.  
Merrily, merrily shall I live now  
Under the blossom that hangs on the bough.

"Who is Silvia?" *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*; "When icicles hang by the wall," *Love's Labour's Lost*; and "Hark, hark! the lark," *Cymbeline*—these poems have a singing quality and a simplicity of content that bring them within the enjoyment range of our older children, provided they hear them before they read them.

### William Blake, 1757-1827

#### Songs of Innocence

Blake was the first Englishman to write a book of poems for and about children—*Songs of Innocence*, which is a landmark in English literature as well as in children's literature. The average child may not particularly enjoy some of the more difficult poems, but he will enjoy many of them if he hears them read aloud naturally and rhythmically by someone who likes their melodies. For Blake's poems are indeed songs, as full of cadences and lovely sounds as music.

It has always seemed easier to understand Blake's songs, their beauty and their limitations, if we know something not only of the man himself but of his art, for Blake was primarily an artist. Some of the stories about Blake's life, particularly his childhood, might well be told to the older children as an introduction both to his poems and to his illustrations. For younger children, we omit biographical data and expose them to such of the poems as they are capable of enjoying.

William Blake was the second of five children. His father had a small hosier's shop in London, and in the rooms over the shop Blake lived until he was a young man. He was ordinarily an amiable, gentle child, but when roused would sometimes show a violent temper. From the time he was four years old he saw visions, and he continued to see them throughout his seventy years. At four, he saw the face of God looking at him through the window. A few years later, he saw a tree full of angels. He told his mother he had met and talked with Ezekiel, and she punished him for telling a lie. As a man, he insisted that he talked with his dead brother, with the poet

Milton, the Apostle Paul, and other great ones, who, though dead, gave him continual guidance. All his life he told people about his visions as a matter of course, and so he was called "mad Blake" by the skeptical.

As a little boy, William was educated at home, but he showed such an unusual talent for drawing that his father, limited as his funds probably were, sent the boy to the drawing school of Henry Par. The ten-year-old boy worked devotedly at his drawing and further enriched his art experience by haunting the shops and exhibitions of the great art dealers of London. These men, recognizing the extraordinary interest and discrimination of the child, used to encourage him to talk about the prints he pored over so eagerly. He was soon known in these famous salesrooms as "the little connoisseur"—for he was already starting his own collection of prints by Michelangelo, Raphael, and Dürer.

Blake was apprenticed at fourteen to a famous engraver, James Basire, who appreciated and understood his strange pupil. Blake's descriptions of his conversations with the prophets made him the butt of ridicule among the other students, and his temper led to frequent fights. Basire, wishing to rescue this odd and talented boy, sent him off to the cathedrals to make drawings in solitude. After seven years of apprenticeship, Blake studied for a short time at the newly formed Royal Academy, which completed his art education.

At twenty-five, Blake married Catherine Boucher, the daughter of a market-gardener. This young woman was completely uneducated but was lovely both in physical appearance and in character. She had a gentle, affectionate disposition that promised well for Blake's happiness but gave no hint of the fortitude, the self-sacrifice, and the unswerving loyalty of the woman who was to endure every hardship in her long life with her gifted husband. Blake taught his wife to read and write, shared with her his visions, and loved her devotedly throughout his life.

In the early days of their marriage the young couple seems to have enjoyed a pros-

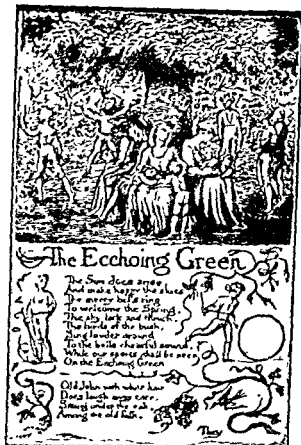
*This is a typical page from Blake's own edition of the Songs of Innocence. The colors are the palest pastels, added by hand.*

perous and happy time. Blake was showing pictures yearly at the exhibitions of the Royal Academy. The rising young artists of the day were his friends, and he was a welcome visitor at the home of the Reverend Mr. and Mrs. Matthews, patrons of the arts. Besides painting his pictures, Blake was writing poems at this time and composing the music to accompany them. None of this music has survived, but Blake is said to have entertained the notables at the Matthews' home by reciting and singing his own compositions.

Then suddenly Blake turned against the people who were making much of him, and withdrew completely from society. The companionship of "the mighty dead" was more important to him than the society of his light-hearted contemporaries. He felt that his friends interfered with his visions; so he turned away from people despite their kindness.

In 1789, *Songs of Innocence* was published. This book was a labor of love on the part of both William and Catherine Blake and was literally a handmade book. Blake wrote the poems and made the decorative designs that accompanied each one, engraving them upon copper plates. Blake published his own book, with his wife helping him print, add the hand-coloring, and even bind it. Notable as this book seems to us now, imaginative and lovely as were its poems and decorations, it was not appreciated at the time.

For us, *Songs of Innocence* marks a turning point in English poetry. The classical school had run thin; Wordsworth was already writing, but the Romantic Movement had not yet become consciously articulate. Then, suddenly, *Songs of Innocence* appeared—fresh, simple, unique. *Songs of Experience* was not published until five years later, but between



the two collections of *Songs* came many of those poems Blake called his works of prophecy. Their mysticism and their incoherence led many people to judge Blake insane. This judgment was reversed even during Blake's lifetime, and today—however people regard his visions and his more confused writings—the best of Blake's poems are ranked among England's finest lyric poetry and a large proportion of his illustrations among the world's greatest engravings.

The remainder of Blake's life is of little interest to children. He had some periods of intense productivity as well as six long years of abject poverty and silence when he did no work at all but communicated only with his visions and his voices. During this period many people in England thought he was dead; only his wife sustained and comforted him. The years of obscurity were brought to an end when some artists (especially one by the name of John Linnell) discovered the



"Oberon and Titania" by William Blake

rell Figgis in *The Paintings of William Blake*, and those found in that useful little book by Philippe Soupault, *William Blake*. For purposes of comparison, consider "Oberon and Titania" and "The Procession from Calvary." These are typical engravings but do not, of course, represent his great range of subject matter.

Look first at "Oberon and Titania." The fairy figures have the dancing lightness of those in Botticelli's "Spring" but seem more unearthly because of the way both faces and bodies melt into the landscape. Only the impish Puck is sharply drawn. His smiling face attracts the eye immediately and not only is a center of interest but suggests the mood of the whole picture—light-hearted merrymaking. The four fairies dancing in a ring at his right are dimly drawn—one is only half visible—but their movement and speed are unmistakable. The whirling effect of their dance is heightened by contrast with the static figures of Oberon and Titania at the extreme left. So Blake, using no photographic details, suggests the rushing movement of an elfin dance and a mood of heedless gaiety. This he does through his use of whirling lines: follow them with your finger until you feel them rising and falling.

Look now at "The Procession from Calvary," which makes use of lines and masses to produce an opposite effect—not light gaiety but majestic power. The men in the procession are carrying the body of the dead Christ and they are followed by three sorrowing women. They are moving against a gloomy background: faintly suggested tree trunks and tree tops, buildings, and distant hills, one of which is surmounted by three black crosses. Dark masses and severe vertical lines are repeated over and over with increasing emphasis and growing clarity, from the dim background to the foreground of marching figures. The robes on the figures sweep downward with columnlike strength and solidity except at the head and feet, where they break into curving lines that produce an astonishing illusion of movement. This procession moves

genius of Blake's illustrations and decided to find the man who had created them, if he was still alive. In 1818 they found him, a quiet, serene old man of sixty, full of his dreams. Then Linnell seems to have been responsible for getting Blake commissions again and for launching him on another period of creative work that lasted until his death ten years later. In the years that followed his meeting with Linnell, Blake was cheered by the friendship and understanding of several artists. When he was sixty-five, the Royal Academy made him a small grant of money, and, best of all, he had the satisfaction of finding his creative powers unimpaired. During those last ten years, Blake turned out some of his finest illustrations. Toward the end of his life, he was too feeble to get out of bed, but eye, hand, and brain worked together more skillfully than ever.

Blake seems to have known when his life was nearing its close. On his last day he sang songs of praise to his Creator and assured his wife that he would always be near her. All his life he had been too close to another world to have any fear of death. He is said to have remarked, "I cannot think of death as more than going out of one room into another."

#### Blake's illustrations

If Blake's pictures for the Book of Job are available to you, examine them by all means; or study the illustrations reproduced by Dar-



strongly and majestically forward. The body of Christ is borne unrealistically by the men, each using one supporting hand and shoulder that scarcely touch the bier. Indeed, that prostrate figure of the dead Christ seems to move forward of itself. The broad horizontal lines of the bier support it; horizontal clouds point to it and follow it, so that as the rigid body of the Christ is propelled forward on those powerful moving columns, the observer's eye travels with the procession out of the picture and onward. Here, again, Blake has given us not a realistic representation but a powerful interpretation of an idea and a feeling. The dark masses produce a somber mood, and the contrasting vertical and horizontal lines give a sense of movement and irresistible strength.

### Blake's poetry

Blake uses in his poetry the same interpretative rather than realistic method. In verse his mediums are no longer lines and masses but the sound and the associative meaning of words and the rhythmic flow of metrical lines. These he uses to create a mood or to convey an idea or feeling—not through a logical reporting of facts, but through words and rhythms that speak to the emotions and the imagination. For example, read aloud the first verse of

#### SPRING

*Sound the flutel  
Now 't is mute;  
Birds delight,  
Day and night,  
Nightingale  
In the dale,  
Lark in sky,—  
Merrily,*

*Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.*

This opening verse suffices to set the mood of joy for the whole poem. The short, tripping lines and the brief words are like quick dance steps. The clear vowel sounds and the refrain, with its thrice-repeated "merrily," make a melody of every verse. Titania's fairies might



"Procession from Calvary" by William Blake

dance to this song—the lines move with the same lightness and speed. But should children get every picture in every line, each in turn? Should they be told that larks and nightingales are not American but British birds? Heaven forbid! Four-year-old children like the sound of this poem with its rushing movement. Older children will like it, too, if it is read to them for just what it is: a song that suggests the exuberance of spring.

For contrast in mood, turn to those two companion poems, "The Little Boy Lost" and "The Little Boy Found." Read the former aloud. Doesn't it remind you, in both mood and tempo, of Schubert's famous song, "The Erl King"?

#### THE LITTLE BOY LOST

*"Father, father, where are you going?  
Oh, do not walk so fast!  
Speak, father, speak to your little boy,  
Or else I shall be lost."*

*The night was dark, no father was there,  
The child was wet with dew;  
The mire was deep, and the child did weep,  
And away the vapour flew.*

Do you feel the terror of a lost child crying out to his father? The poem does not say where the father is or how the child lost him; its rapidly moving eight lines convey only the feelings of anguish and mystery. Notice how the metrical lines suggest the running of the child, just as Blake's graphic lines suggest

movement in his pictures. Now turn to the tender reassurance of

#### THE LITTLE BOY FOUND

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,  
Led by the wandering light,  
Began to cry, but God, ever nigh,  
Appeared like his father, in white.  
He kissed the child, and by the hand led,  
And to his mother brought,  
Who in sorrow pale, through the lonely dale,  
The little boy weeping sought.

This poem begins on a minor note, but the hurry and the terror are gone. The words and lines move quietly and gently, telling how God, appearing to the child in the guise of his father, leads him safely into the arms of his mother. Was the father dead? Blake never says, because he is concerned in these two poems not with reporting facts but with conveying powerfully and briefly (with no distracting details) the terror of being lost, the sense of guidance and comfort outside ourselves, and the blessed relief of coming home to love and security. Not circumstance but emotion is important in these poems—one a poem of terror, one a poem of reassurance.

Again rhythm produces emotion in the "Laughing Song." Here Blake induces merriment through lines that rise steadily to a crescendo just as a laugh rises and increases. They never come to a rest until they burst into the hearty "Ha ha he" of the last line:

#### LAUGHING SONG

When the green woods laugh with the voice of  
joy,  
And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;  
When the air does laugh with our merry wit,  
And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;  
When the meadows laugh with lively green,  
And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene;  
When Mary and Susan and Emily  
With their sweet round mouths sing, "Ha ha  
he!"  
When the painted birds laugh in the shade,  
When our table with cherries and nuts is  
spread:  
Come live, and be merry, and join with me,  
To sing the sweet chorus of "Ha ha he!"

This mounting gaiety is infectious, and children invariably smile or break into giggles with that laughing conclusion. What all the descriptive lines mean they can sense only hazily when they first hear them. The details grow in richness with repeated hearings, but to the contagious fun the children respond immediately. Here Blake captures laughter in the words and metrical lines of poetry, just as he captured gaiety in the masses and graphic lines of his fairy pictures.

#### Using Blake's poems with children

These examples could be multiplied, but perhaps they are sufficient to emphasize that Blake is not striving for realistic effects in his poems any more than he was in his illustrations. So when you read the *Songs* with children, do not bear down heavily on the factual details. Read the poems aloud for their melody and for the feeling-response they invariably arouse. If the children hear them read well enough, they experience a momentary feeling of gaiety or wonder, terror or peace. Then Blake speaks to them as he wished to speak—in terms of universal feeling.

The effortless melody of many of these songs makes them sing in your head with a few readings. That is true of "Piping down the valleys wild," in which Blake describes the feeling that brought him to write these poems. Blake called this poem "Introduction," and so it may serve to introduce children to his *Songs*.

#### INTRODUCTION

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:  
"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
"Piper, pipe that song again;"  
So I piped; he wept to hear.  
"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!"  
So I sang the same again,  
While he wept with joy to hear.

Illustration by Jacynth Parsons for  
Songs of Innocence by William  
Blake, Ralph T. Hale, 1928  
(original in color, book 7 x 9½)

Notice the decorative  
design of foliage above and  
the children below. This  
picture is not stylized, but for  
all its realistic details  
makes a beautiful pattern.  
Compare this picture with  
Blake's own illustration for  
the same poem, page 163.



"Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book, that all may read."  
So he vanished from my sight;  
And I plucked a hollow reed,  
And I made a rural pen,  
And I stained the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

"The Shepherd" and "The Lamb" (p. 216)  
are in a quiet mood—the latter belongs to the  
religious literature of early childhood to-  
gether with "The Little Boy Lost" and "The  
Little Boy Found." Pictures of children at  
play are found in "Nurse's Song" and "The  
Echoing Green." Isn't that title—"Echoing  
Green"—a melody in itself? Young children  
like "Infant Joy" (p. 192), an imaginary  
dialogue between a two-day-old baby and a  
grown-up who is wondering what to name it.  
This poem is typical of Blake's unrealistic  
style, as you can readily discover if you try to  
imagine how Dorothy Aldis or A. A. Milne  
would present the same situation. It is not a  
question of naming a baby John or Peter that  
Blake is concerned with, but the feeling of joy  
that a baby arouses. This little dialogue is not  
easy to read but is worth your best efforts to  
bring it to a child's understanding.

"The Little Black Boy" is a most sensitive  
presentation of the racial problem. It belongs

to the upper grades or high schools, as do also  
"The Chimney Sweeper," "Holy Thursday,"  
and the religious poem, "The Divine Image."  
These last four poems illustrate the remark-  
ably modern character of Blake's social and  
religious ideals. Indeed, the spiritual quality  
throughout the *Songs of Innocence* is not  
only a true reflection of the idealistic quality  
of the man's life but is one more reason for  
using them with children.

There are perhaps only nine or ten of  
Blake's *Songs* that belong in the literature of  
the elementary school, and not more than four  
or five of these can be used in the primary  
grades. But if, through hearing them read  
aloud, the children like one or two of these  
songs well enough to ask for them at poetry  
time, or if they discover that they can say  
some of them aloud with us, or if they find  
that one of the songs is running through their  
heads, then we shall have accomplished all  
we could hope for. Their liking for authentic  
poetry is beginning and may become a per-  
manent source of refreshment.

**Christina Rossetti, 1830-1894**  
*Sing Song*

Christina Rossetti gave to children that small  
treasury of verses—*Sing Song*. Only a few  
incidents in her life will appeal to children,

but to students of English literature and art she is interesting not only because she was the sister of the poet and painter, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and the model for several Pre-Raphaelite paintings, but also because she was an artist in her own right. Christina Rossetti contributed a fresh, if melancholy, note to English lyric poetry.

The Rossetti family was unusual in several ways. Apparently every member was beautiful to look at, highly intelligent, and uniquely gifted. The father, a distinguished Italian scholar, came to London as a political exile and found there not only the opportunity of continuing his writing on Dante, but also a charming wife, Frances Polidori. Even when Mrs. Rossetti was an old woman, visitors commented on her beauty and her intelligence. Her husband and her four children adored her, and the children—Maria Francesca, William Michael, Dante Gabriel, and Christina Georgina—quoted her word as final authority, painted her portrait, and wrote poems to and about her. Christina wrote a series of valentine poems all dedicated to her mother. It is amusing to discover that the recipient of this adoration found her artistic family a bit trying now and then. Mrs. Rossetti wrote:

I had always a passion for intellect, and my wish was that my husband should be distinguished for intellect, and my children too. I have had my wish; and now I wish that there were a little less intellect in the family, so as to allow for a little more common sense.<sup>1</sup>

The Rossettis lived in a shabby house on a down-at-the-heel London street. There was no glimpse of beauty in any direction, but the father often took the children to walk in the parks and to see some of the notable sights of historical old London. What a charming picture they must have presented—the grave, handsome man with the four dark-eyed, sparkling children! The Rossetti house was the rendezvous for Italian political refugees and Italian writers, musicians, and artists; so

whatever the outer world of the little Rossettis lacked in beauty was compensated for by the highly exciting intellectual life of their family and friends.

The little country home of Christina's grandparents, the Polidoris, in Buckinghamshire, provided her with her only rural experiences. There on her occasional visits the city child made the acquaintance of frogs, toads, moles, caterpillars, birds, and flowers. These she recalled over and over in her poems. She learned to love the small "beasties," and in a day when girls were absurdly squeamish, she could pick up toads and caterpillars with tenderness and never a qualm.

Christina was always delicate, but the gay, "skittish" child grew gradually into a melancholy, deeply religious young woman, something of a recluse, unnaturally indifferent to clothes, wrapped up in her adored family, her books, and her writings. There were good reasons for this change, chief of them the unhappy conclusion of two love affairs. During her years of emotional vicissitudes, Christina must have found release and satisfaction in the recognition and praise given to her poetry. *Goblin Market and Other Poems* appeared in 1862 and immediately attracted wide attention, particularly the title poem, which was praised by the leading critics of the day.

But Christina Rossetti became more and more of an invalid until her death in her sixty-fourth year. Oddly enough, it was during these years of sadness and pain that she wrote her gayest poems and dedicated to a baby, "without permission," that nursery classic, *Sing Song*, which appeared in 1872. The light-hearted verses of this little book she herself translated into Italian under the title, *Ninna Nanna*—a charming gift for the children of her father's country!

#### Lyric quality

*Sing Song* verses provide the young child with an ideal introduction to lyric poetry because they lead him imperceptibly from the patter of nonsense verse to the subtle and lovely ca-

<sup>1</sup>Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *His Family Letters*, p. 22.

dences of authentic poetry. "If a pig wore a wig" might have come out of *Mother Goose* and so might the popular

Mix a pancake,  
Stir a pancake,  
Pop it in the pan;  
Fry the pancake,  
Toss the pancake,—  
Catch it if you can.

But Christina Rossetti's little songs have a music which is obviously more subtle than *Mother Goose*, and they give expression to more complex ideas. For instance, the personification of the daffodil as a lady in yellow and green is found in both *Mother Goose* and *Sing Song*, but notice the difference. *Mother Goose* gives us the briefest personification with no embellishments:

Daffadowndilly  
Has come up to town,  
In a yellow petticoat  
And a green gown.

But Christina Rossetti gives us hills and vales, a chilly springtime, and the suggestion of the daffodil's fragility in those clear, clipped words, "straight and frail," and the delicate sounds of "chilly," "hilly," "dilly"—all slight as the flower.

Growing in the vale  
By the uplands hilly,  
Growing straight and frail,  
Lady Daffadowndilly.  
In a golden crown,  
And a scant green gown  
While the spring blows chilly,  
Lady Daffadown,  
Sweet Daffadowndilly.

Christina Rossetti makes subtle and repeated use of vowel and consonant sounds to suggest the feeling or idea described by the words. Take her wind poems, for instance. There is quite a group of them and every one describes a different kind of wind, which you can almost hear in the sound of the words. There is a stormy, ominous wind from the sea:

The wind has such a rainy sound  
Moaning through the town,  
The sea has such a windy sound,—  
Will the ships go down?

The apples in the orchard  
Tumble from their tree.—  
Oh will the ships go down, go down,  
In the windy sea?

Notice the use of the *n* and *d* sounds, which heighten the minor note of the poem. Then there is the poem about a tender little breeze:

O wind, where have you been,  
That you blow so sweet?  
Among the violets  
Which blossom at your feet.  
The honeysuckle waits  
For Summer and for heat;  
But violets in the chilly Spring  
Make the turf so sweet.

And, finally, there is that gentle wind you can hear whispering in the soft, slight words of

Who has seen the wind?  
Neither I nor you:  
But when the leaves hang trembling  
The wind is passing thro'.  
Who has seen the wind?  
Neither you nor I:  
But when the trees bow down their heads  
The wind is passing by.

### Tone color

Every reader of *Sing Song* will have favorite examples of the skillful use of tone color. This is worth noting because the way in which word sounds fit the mood or sensory impression of the poems largely determines how they should be read. For instance, with just the slightest exaggeration in emphasis you will discover that the words actually hop in that amusing couplet describing a rabbit:

And timid, funny, brisk little bunny  
Winks his nose and sits all sunny.

Or read aloud the couplets of that remarkable color poem, "What is pink? A rose is pink"

noticing particularly these last four verses:

What is yellow? pears are yellow,  
Rich and ripe and mellow.

Roll these words  
under your  
tongue and you  
can fairly  
taste pears

What is green? the grass is green,  
With small flowers between.

Sounds delicate  
and small like  
spears of grass

What is violet? clouds are violet  
In the summer twilight.

Slow, clinging  
words, quiet as  
the twilight

What is orange? why, an orange,  
Just an orange!

Explosive,  
staccato words  
like a sudden  
laugh

### Subject matter

Young children respond with delight to the music of Christina Rossetti's slight, exquisite little lyrics, and, fortunately, most of the subject matter is understandable and appealing to them. There are, to be sure, a number of elegies about dead babies which should be omitted, but her live babies are delightful from the first poem:

Angels at the foot,  
And angels at the head,  
And like a curly little lamb  
My pretty babe in bed.

to "I know a baby, such a baby" and the lullaby:

Lullaby, oh lullaby!  
Flowers are closed and lambs are sleeping;  
Lullaby, oh lullaby!  
Stars are up, the moon is peeping;  
Lullaby, oh lullaby!  
While the birds are silence keeping,  
(Lullaby, oh lullaby!)  
Sleep, my baby, fall a-sleeping,  
Lullaby, oh lullaby!

She brings in other members of the family circle besides the baby: there is father "hot and tired, knocking at the door," mother shaking the cherry tree, "Minnie and Mattie and fat little May," and an eight o'clock visit from the postman. Then there are all the small creatures the child delights in: a cock crowing "Kookoorooloo," "a frisky lamb and a frisky child," "hopping frogs," "plodding toads," pussy, doggy, white hen and her chicks,

the "brown and furry caterpillar," and robins and wrens. There is a whole garden full of flowers, the sun, moon, and stars, and the rainbow seen in the poem, "Boats sail on the rivers":

Boats sail on the rivers,  
And ships sail on the seas;  
But clouds that sail across the sky  
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,  
As pretty as you please;  
But the bow that bridges heaven,  
And overtops the trees,  
And builds a road from earth to sky,  
Is prettier far than these.

Moralizing is rare but amusingly done. If it is gaily read, children will invariably smile at

Seldom "can't,"  
Seldom "don't";  
Never "shan't,"  
Never "won't."

For the most part, Christina Rossetti keeps to the small creatures and objects of the young child's world and to the family and playmates he knows the best.

### Bits of wisdom

For older children, there are some choice bits of wit and wisdom that the young child cannot grasp. In these poems the same idea or play on words is repeated several times. For example, "A pin has a head, but has no hair" is a pattern that occurs again in "The peacock has a score of eyes." The weighing of values in "A diamond or a coal?" is repeated in the still finer comparison of precious stones with a flint:

An emerald is as green as grass;  
A ruby red as blood;  
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven;  
A flint lies in the mud.  
A diamond is a brilliant stone,  
To catch the world's desire;  
An opal holds a fiery spark;  
But a flint holds fire.

It takes an older child to interpret such fables

as these, but what vivid, colorful bits of wisdom they are!

Christina Rossetti's masterpiece is undoubtedly her fairy poem, *Goblin Market*. While

### Three poets of nature

Our next group of poets—Sara Teasdale, Elizabeth Coatsworth, and Hilda Conkling—are dissimilar in most respects but have one characteristic in common: they observe the face of nature and record its beauty and its effect with an imaginative turn which kindles a responsive spark in the reader. The form of their poetry varies from the pure lyric to free verse. Certainly Elizabeth Coatsworth and Hilda Conkling are less melodious than Sara Teasdale, yet they arouse—through the precision of their observation and their sensitive interpretation of experience—a response which, if more intellectual than most of our singing poets produce, is no less moving.

#### Sara Teasdale, 1884-1933

##### Stars To-night

In the death of Sara Teasdale, America lost one of her fine lyric poets. If children can suddenly catch the charm of even one of her poems, they will have a surer sense of poetry and the stirring of the spirit that it can bring.

Sara Teasdale was born in St. Louis of wealthy parents. She was a delicate child who went to school irregularly, and she never had to face the bread-and-butter struggle which has a stabilizing effect on most people. She read and traveled widely and after her marriage lived in New York. The summer before she died she was in London in search of material for a biography of Christina Rossetti.

Her poems have something of the cryptic brevity of Emily Dickinson's but are richer in sensuous beauty and emotion. She wrote much about love, the stars, the night, and the sea. In her last book with its enigmatic title, *Strange Victory*, the concluding poem ends with these lines:

I shall find the crystal of peace,—above me  
Stars I shall find.

the occasional child of twelve or fourteen might enjoy hearing this poem, it is too long and too complex for the average. However, no adult who enjoys poetry should miss it.

Those stars shine all through her poetry, and to the selections from her poems made for boys and girls she gave the title *Stars To-night*. When Macmillan added to this unusual collection the illustrations of Dorothy Lathrop, the result was a book of rare beauty. Dorothy Lathrop's pen-and-ink drawings have a frosty, sparkling quality and are as delicate and sensitive as the poems of Sara Teasdale. Page after page of this slender book is unforgettable because you remember the picture and the poem as a unit.

The first poem in the book is one of the favorites and is characteristic of Sara Teasdale's highly individual style and mood:

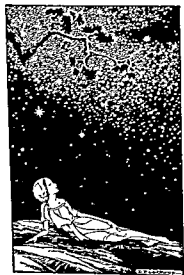
##### NIGHT

Stars over snow,  
And in the west a planet  
Swinging below a star—  
Look for a lovely thing and you will find it,  
It is not far—  
It never will be far.

For the second poem, "Stars," Miss Lathrop has captured the enchantment of the experience with a picture of a child alone, looking up at the night sky and awed by the great procession of stars marching up the dome of heaven, "stately and still." You can almost imagine the child whispering to herself the concluding lines of

##### STARS

Alone in the night  
On a dark hill  
With pines around me  
Spicy and still,  
And a heaven full of stars  
Over my head,  
White and topaz  
And misty red;



Myriads with beating  
Hearts of fire  
That acon  
Cannot vex or tire;  
Up the dome of heaven  
Like a great hill,  
I watch them marching  
Stately and still,  
And I know that I  
Am honored to be  
Witness  
Of so much majesty.

In the winter when the zenith is ablaze  
with stars, older children should have these  
poems. But a five-year-old child can enjoy

#### THE FALLING STAR

I saw a star slide down the sky,  
Blinding the north as it went by,  
Too burning and too quick to hold,  
Too lovely to be bought or sold,  
Good only to make wishes on  
And then forever to be gone.

While the poems of Sara Teasdale are  
largely descriptive and are often too subtle

Illustration by Dorothy P. Lathrop for *Stars To-night* by  
Sara Teasdale, Macmillan, 1934 (book 5½ x 8½)

*Night, space, and frosty stars are delicately  
suggested in this pen-and-ink drawing.  
The children in Dorothy Lathrop's illustrations are  
always more ethereal than the animals (see page  
469); her pictures are invariably  
beautiful in content and composition.*

and too difficult for the average child under  
fourteen, no child should miss this book.  
Don't force the poems. Read the easier ones  
first—those already mentioned, along with  
"Winter Noon," "February Twilight," and  
"Redbirds." You will probably not use all  
these at once but will read just one poem sev-  
eral times and then leave the book around  
where the children can look at it. Poring over  
the pictures helps establish the mood of the  
poems, and presently some child will bring  
you the book and say, "Read this one." So the  
range of appreciation will grow. If the chil-  
dren appropriate only one of these poems but  
really enjoy it and make it their own, then  
you have given them a treasure.

Oh, better than the minting  
Of a gold-crowned king  
Is the safe-kept memory  
Of a lovely thing.<sup>1</sup>

Elizabeth Coatsworth, 1893-

Some of Elizabeth Coatsworth's poems have  
appeared in book form, but the best of them  
are found in her early stories (p. 436).  
Perhaps sometime all of the poems will be  
gathered together under a cover of their own,  
because, although they serve to complement  
the tales, many are equally valuable when  
read by themselves.

Elizabeth Coatsworth (Mrs. Henry Bes-  
ton) was born in Buffalo, New York. She en-  
joyed the double blessing of an excellent edu-  
cation and wide travel. She went to a private

<sup>1</sup>"The Coin" from *Stars To-night*.



school as a child and comments that its "English system" resulted in severe, scholarly discipline. After graduation from Vassar, she took her M.A. at Columbia University. Meanwhile she had traveled in this country, in Mexico, Europe, and Egypt, and, after her graduate degree, spent a year in the Orient. Today, Mr. and Mrs. Beston divide their time between an old house in Massachusetts and a hundred-acre farm on a lake in Maine. Both husband and wife are writers of books for children.

Elizabeth Coatsworth's *The Cat Who Went to Heaven* won the Newbery Award for 1930 but is not very popular with children. Better known and better liked are her historical tales such as *Away Goes Sally*, *Five Bushel Farm*, and *The Fair American*. Within the pages of these books are some of her best poems. A few of them are to be found in good anthologies, but a complete reading of them between chapters of her books will reveal their full range and beauty.

### Characteristics of style

A certain style about the poems is well illustrated by the frequently quoted "Swift things are beautiful," from *Away Goes Sally*:

Swift things are beautiful:  
Swallows and deer,  
And lightning that falls  
Bright-veined and clear,  
River and meteors,  
Wind in the wheat,  
The strong-withered horse,  
The runner's sure feet.

And slow things are beautiful:  
The closing of day,  
The pause of the wave  
That curves downward to spray,  
The ember that crumbles,  
The opening flower,  
And the ox that moves on  
In the quiet of power.

Here are the comparisons that the author uses, not incidentally but as the theme of the entire poem. You can find other examples of these contrasts in all three books. From *Five*

*Bushel Farm* there is another one on swiftness, but treated differently—"Swift comes the summer." In *The Fair American* there is a fine comparison of sorrow, danger, and courage, long ago and today, in the poem beginning "So long ago," and the still more striking poem comparing a clipper ship with flame, bird, deer, and horse. Building a poem around a series of comparisons seems then to be a favorite pattern of Elizabeth Coatsworth. It is an exceedingly provocative one for children to study and try for themselves.

Another aspect of her style is the smooth, flowing lines that fall so gently on the ear. Poem after poem has this quietness. From *Away Goes Sally* read "Hard from the southeast blows the wind," with its description of a gathering storm without and the cozy comfort of an open fire within:

Hard from the southeast blows the wind  
Promising rain.  
The clouds are gathering, and dry leaves  
Tap at the pane.

Early the cows come wandering home  
To shadowy bars,  
Early the candles are alight  
And a few stars.

Now is the hour that lies between  
Bright day and night,  
When in the dusk the fire blooms  
In tongues of light,

And the cat comes to bask herself  
In the soft heat,  
And Madame Peace draws up her chair  
To warm her feet.

With those concluding lines, you can fairly feel yourself relaxing and stretching a bit. "No leaf is left," "How gray the rain," and "In the forest it is cool" are only a few examples of that quietness with which the poems abound. Not that the lines cannot frolic now and then, but there is more of slow-moving calmness about them. For this reason, reading many of the poems at a time is monotonous.

Both in her prose and in her poetry, Elizabeth Coatsworth makes an effective use of

words. Sometimes they are rich with associative meaning, such as "Madame Peace" drawing up her chair to the fire to "warm her feet"—not extraordinary words but laden with associations of peace, warmth, and comfort. Sometimes the words are pleasant sounding, as "the quiet of power" or

All, all awaits. Up hilly, down valley—  
The time is ripe, and away goes Sally!

On the whole these poems are not markedly musical, but they are rich in sensory words. For instance: fallen apples that "smell cidery on the air," sleigh bells that ring "icily sweet," children with their "mouths stained with berry juice," "bright-veined lightning," and little buds "no larger than a mouse's ear." You can find examples of her use of words which make you see, smell, taste, touch, and hear.

#### Nature

From the single lines and phrases already quoted, you can feel her sensitive response to nature. The poems in this category seem to fall into two classes. Some are straight nature descriptions, and others are brief, lovely descriptions which lead toward, or climax in, a human mood or situation. One of the finest examples of the second type is "How gray the rain," from *Five Bushel Farm*:

How gray the rain  
And gray the world  
And gray the rain clouds overhead.  
When suddenly  
Some cloud is furled  
And there is gleaming sun instead!  
The raindrops drip  
Prismatic light,  
And trees and meadows burn in green,  
And arched in air  
Serene and bright  
The rainbow all at once is seen.  
Serene and bright  
The rainbow stands  
That was not anywhere before,  
And so may joy  
Fill empty hands  
When someone enters through a door.

These poems linking together nature and human concerns are particularly notable. They are, however, often a bit subtle for children and may require a little talking over before the literal-minded children understand their implications. But the nature descriptions are brief and are understandable to all children. For those who know salt marshes, the first poem in *Away Goes Sally*, "This is the hay that no man planted," is particularly good. In that same book there is the memorable characterization of oak leaves that most children will recognize:

When all the other leaves are gone  
The brown oak leaves still linger on,  
Their branches obstinately lifted  
To frozen wind and snow deep-drifted.  
But when the winter is well passed  
The brown oak leaves drop down at last,  
To let the little buds appear  
No larger than a mouse's ear.

In this group of nature poems there is an interesting pair that might start the children to writing their own poetry. In *Away Goes Sally*, the autumn poem beginning "When the pumpkin yellows" (page 38) is repeated in *Five Bushel Farm* (page 19) except that the last two verses of the poems are different. Here is an experiment children might try. Ask them "How else could the poem be concluded? What would you put in your verses?" The books also contain two fire poems that are worth comparing (*The Fair American*, page 18, and *Five Bushel Farm*, page 30).

#### Wisdom

The following verse from *The Fair American* is typical of a small group of the poems that present an occasional bit of homely wisdom:

He who has never known hunger  
Has never known how good  
The taste of bread may be,  
The kindness of food.

Such verses lack the epigrammatic and sparkling quality of similar poems by Christina Rossetti but have instead a straightforward

simplicity. In this same book there is the philosophic

*To have nothing at all  
Is to have much still.*

and the interesting application to human life of the plant:

*The plant cut down to the root  
Does not hate.  
It uses all its strength  
To grow once more.*

*Turn, boy, to the unknown field  
Beyond the gate.  
Never look back again  
To the bolted door.*

There are examples of homely wisdom in her other books, but these suffice, perhaps, to illustrate this type of poem and the style in which it is written.

### Animals

Small animals appear throughout the poems, but cats are favorites. There are a number of poems about them, almost always in a more or less humorous mood. The gayest of these from *Away Goes Sally* begins, "Who are you?" asked the cat of the bear," and contains a dialogue that is thoroughly amusing. Certainly one of the loveliest poems about animals, also from *Away Goes Sally*, is

#### THE RABBIT'S SONG OUTSIDE THE TAVERN

*We, who play under the pines,  
We, who dance in the snow  
That shines blue in the light of the moon,  
Sometimes halt as we go—  
Stand with our ears erect,  
Our noses testing the air,  
To gaze at the golden world  
Behind the windows there.*

*Suns they have in a cave,  
Stars, each on a tall white stem,  
And the thought of a fox or an owl  
Seems never to trouble them.  
They laugh and eat and are warm,  
Their food is ready at hand,  
While hungry out in the cold  
We little rabbits stand.*

*But they never dance as we dance!  
They haven't the speed nor the grace.  
We scorn both the dog and the cat  
Who lie by their fireplace.  
We scorn them licking their paws,  
Their eyes on an upraised spoon—  
We who dance hungry and wild  
Under a winter's moon.*

The poetry of Elizabeth Coatsworth is unusually ideational for juvenile verse. It obviously belongs to older children, but even they can usually understand the poems more readily if they encounter them after the chapter which precedes each poem has built up the background. Many of the poems, however, are usable without the text and are far too fine to miss. Their weakness is their limited range and lack of lively rhythms and melodies.

### Hilda Conkling, 1910-

*Poems by a Little Girl  
Shoes of the Wind*

That a little girl living much in the company of her poet-mother should begin "talking" her own poems is not surprising. But the quality of Hilda Conkling's poems is surprising. They are beautiful both in ideas and in expression.

Hilda's mother, Mrs. Grace Hazard Conkling, is a professor of English at Smith College, a gifted musician, and a writer of poems in free verse. Her two little girls, Elsa and Hilda, grew up in the lovely New England country of Northampton, Massachusetts, with daily enjoyment of garden and countryside, books and music. Not only must the companionship of the three have been unusually close, but the whole environment was favorable to creative expression. At first, both little girls "dictated" their poems to their mother. For Hilda poetry remained the favored mode of expression, but the other child, Elsa, turned gradually to music.

When Hilda was ten years old, *Poems by a Little Girl* was published with a laudatory introduction by the poet, Amy Lowell. Since it created something of a sensation, Mrs.

Conkling gave occasional lectures on how the poems happened. She said the poems often came when they were walking, or in conversation. Hilda never hesitated for a word, and the mother made notes as best she could. Later she read her copy to Hilda, who would correct any word that had been inadvertently changed. The poems stand exactly as the child spoke them. When Hilda was twelve, her second book was published, *Shoes of the Wind*; then, after that, so far as we can discover, no more poetry from Hilda! Speculations as to why she ceased writing are beside the point. Our concern is with these poems that have for children important qualities.

### Free verse

First of all, their lack of rhyme is an asset. They are for the most part in free verse form. The time always comes when children are obsessed with rhyming everything and calling it poetry; then it is a good thing to read them some of young Hilda's verses and say, "Here is poetry written by a little girl. It has no rhyme. Why do you suppose it is called poetry?" Of course that question is a poser. It disconcerts college students, but eventually children and older students both arrive at certain unmistakably poetic qualities in these unrhymed stanzas. "She *sees* things good," one child said after hearing

### MOON SONG

There is a star that runs very fast,  
That goes pulling the moon  
Through the tops of the poplars.

Another child, hearing "Chickadee" and "Red Rooster," thought the poet remembered how things *sounded*, too. Eventually, they discover that it is the fresh or different way in which she tells something with just a few words that makes these little verses different from prose. For instance:

Tree-toad is a leaf-gray shadow  
That sings.  
Tree-toad is never seen  
Unless a star squeezes through the leaves,  
Or a moth looks sharply at a gray branch.

Hilda Conkling's largely unrhymed but sensitively perceptive verses are, then, a salutary antidote for the rhyming passion when it produces only doggerel and seems to handicap the development of original observation and expression. Her limitation for children is that she is predominantly descriptive. She is chiefly concerned with finding the precise words that tell how something looked or felt or appealed to her imagination. That the short feathers along the rooster's back

Are the dark color of wet rocks  
Or the rippled green of ships  
When I look at their sides through water.

is a remarkably fine and discriminating observation, but too much of this kind of detailed description swamps children. They cannot see rooster for words, or, rather, after not one but a number of these short, highly descriptive verses, children cannot follow the idea. Their attention is gone.

### Using the poems with children

The most effective way to use the poems is singly, slipped in with other poetry of a less meditative sort. Or use a particular poem when the occasion demands it. The first dandelions of spring could hardly be welcomed by a more charming verse than Hilda Conkling's "Dandelion." Or when gardens get under way the children will appreciate "Little Snail." And for introducing fairies to children, there is no verse better than her "Fairies."

Everyone will have favorites among her poems. Young children like her "Velvets," "Mouse," and both the "Butterfly" verses, particularly the one with the mildly contrary ending: "I have to go the opposite way." They like the poems already quoted and the rather unusual "Easter." On this subject there is almost nothing in literature for young children except general spring poems, but Hilda Conkling has recorded the sensory impressions a child receives from Easter Day: bells ringing, people, lilies, a sense of joy!

For older children, "Red Rooster," "The Old Bridge," "Tree-Toad," "Gift," and "I

Am" are a few of the favorites. The last-named poem might well start the children writing their own "I Am." One important reason why it is good to use these imagina-

tive little verses with children is that they give impetus to the creative urge and produce a little more boldness in trying to think and write freshly.

## Poets of fairyland

Our next group of poets, William Allingham, Rose Fyleman, and Walter de la Mare, includes one modern voice of major importance. It is the voice of Walter de la Mare, who is often compared to William Blake in the lyric beauty of his poetry and the otherworldliness of much of his subject matter. He occupies a position of unique importance in the modern world of adult poetry, and his contribution to children's literature is a treasure all should know and cherish. Beside De la Mare, William Allingham and Rose Fyleman are only pleasant minor voices. It is significant that all three of these poets of fairyland are Irish or British. Somehow the fairies seem never to have emigrated to the New World and it is chiefly in England and Ireland that we hear of them today.

### William Allingham, 1824-1889

#### Robin Redbreast

The name of William Allingham immediately brings to mind one poem, "The Fairies." The perfection of its fairy lore is accounted for by the fact that the author was an Irishman and so, by birth, a natural authority on "the wee folk." Why the Irish should know more about fairies than any other people we cannot say, but so it is.

Allingham was born in Ballyshannon, Donegal, Ireland—surely by the sound of it the very seat and center of fairyland or at least of folklore and balladry. Because of financial difficulties, Allingham was forced to combine his literary interests with various "white-collar" jobs. It was not until he was forty-six that he resigned his civil-service post to become an editor of the well-known *Fraser's Magazine*. During his life he published not only his own poems but collections of songs, ballads, and stories, and a book on

the ballads, *The Ballad Book*. Today, Macmillan's "Little Library" has reprinted his poems for children under the title *Robin Redbreast*.

This book contains "The Fairies," which is as fine a lyric poem as you can give children. They like it first because it sings, and second because it contains the vital statistics they have always wished to know about "the good people." What do they wear? Where do they live? What do they eat? What tricks do they play? Allingham's poem supplies all the answers. You must, of course, read it aloud to catch the dancing, tripping rhythm of the trooping fairies, and the sudden change to the grave, sober narrative of little Bridget:

#### THE FAIRIES

Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a-hunting  
For fear of little men;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore  
Some make their home,  
They live on crispy pancakes  
Of yellow tide-foam;  
Some in the reeds  
Of the black mountain lake,  
With frogs for their watch-dogs,  
All night awake.

High on the hill-top  
The old King sits;  
He is now so old and gray  
He's nigh lost his wits  
With a bridge of white mist  
Columbkil he crosses,  
On his stately journeys  
From Slieveleague to Rosses;  
Or going up with music  
On cold starry nights

To sup with the Queen  
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget  
For seven years long;  
When she came down again  
Her friends were all gone.  
They took her lightly back,  
Between the night and morrow,  
They thought that she was fast asleep,  
But she was dead with sorrow.  
They have kept her ever since  
Deep within the lake,  
On a bed of flag leaves,  
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill side,  
Through the mosses bare,  
They have planted thorn trees  
For pleasure here and there.  
If any man so daring  
As dig them up in spite,  
He shall find their sharpest thorns  
In his bed at night.

Up the airy mountain,  
Down the rushy glen,  
We daren't go a hunting  
For fear of little men;  
Wee folk, good folk,  
Trooping all together;  
Green jacket, red cap,  
And white owl's feather.

It has always seemed a pity to give five-year-olds only the first verse of this poem, when by waiting until they are seven or eight they will like it all. At that age, they also enjoy Allingham's "The Fairy Shoemaker," especially with the Artzybasheff illustrations. "The Swing" appears in many anthologies, but nothing Allingham has ever written for children compares with the gay, lilting "Up the airy mountain."

**Rose Fyleman, 1877-**

*Fairies and Chimneys*  
*The Fairy Flute*  
*The Fairy Green*  
*Fairies and Friends*

When Rose Fyleman visited the United States and read her poems to the children in schools and libraries, she captivated her young hearers

both because of her readings and because of her attractive personality. The children murmured their favorite poems with her and fixed fascinated and incredulous eyes upon this handsome person who had written them. How could anyone know so much about fairies? Had she really seen the fairy queen herself riding a bus in Oxford Street? Listening to Rose Fyleman, they believed. Here, at last, was a high authority on fairies; she *had* heard them, she *had* seen them, and she reported their latest magic in pleasant little verses for all to read.

Rose Fyleman was born in Nottingham, England. She studied to be both a teacher and a singer, and children have certainly benefited by this dual training. Working with children and writing some poems for them, Rose Fyleman developed a sure sense of her juvenile audience, their interests and their limitations. Her music, she herself feels, helped her poetry. She began writing for the famous English magazine *Punch*, and the first poem she submitted was accepted. It was the favorite which begins "There are fairies at the bottom of our garden."

**Fyleman fairies**

Her books are *Fairies and Chimneys*, *The Fairy Flute*, *The Fairy Green*, and *Fairies and Friends*. "Too many fairies!" comments Mr. Walter Barnes,<sup>1</sup> and so there would be if you used them all at once, which of course you don't. You and the children will soon have your favorites and will let many of the others slide. It is pleasant to have so rich a store to choose from.

To begin with, Rose Fyleman has a trick of combining her fairies with the children's everyday, modern world in a way that is both amusing and convincing. Take as simple an idea as "Differences," where Miss Fyleman contrasts the things Daddy does with those amazing things the fairies do quite easily. Daddy rides in a "snorty" motor, but the

<sup>1</sup>Walter Barnes, "Contemporary Poetry for Children," *Elementary English Review*, April 1936.

fairies ride on the backs of bumble bees. Daddy sails in a "jolly wooden boat," but the fairies sail on a mere "scrap of foam." Daddy climbs hard, rocky mountains, but the fairies "go a-climbing on the mountains in the clouds." Doesn't this juxtaposition of Daddy and the fairies make them natural and seeable? Or take "Yesterday in Oxford Street," where the bus, the shops, and the busy people build up a substantial world of reality. Then, suddenly, into this everyday world comes the fairy queen and alights on the rail of the bus, and, of course, you accept her as a part of the substantial realities. She is the credible surprise that turns an otherwise humdrum day into something worth gloating over:

#### YESTERDAY IN OXFORD STREET

*Yesterday in Oxford Street, oh, what d'you think, my dears?*

*I had the most exciting time I've had for years and years;*

*The buildings looked so straight and tall, the sky was blue between,*

*And, riding on a motor-bus, I saw the fairy queen!*

*Sitting there upon the rail and bobbing up and down,*

*The sun was shining on her wings and on her golden crown;*

*And looking at the shops she was, the pretty silks and lace—*

*She seemed to think that Oxford Street was quite a lovely place.*

*And once she turned and looked at me, and waved her little hand;*

*But I could only stare and stare—oh, would she understand?*

*I simply couldn't speak at all, I simply couldn't stir,*

*And all the rest of Oxford Street was just a shining blur.*

*Then suddenly she shook her wings—a bird had fluttered by—*

*And down into the street she looked and up into the sky;*

*And perching on the railing on a tiny fairy toe,*

*She flashed away so quickly that I hardly saw her go.*

*I never saw her any more, altho' I looked all day;*

*Perhaps she only came to peep, and never meant to stay:*

*But oh, my dears, just think of it, just think what luck for me,*

*That she should come to Oxford Street, and I be there to see!*

These poems that make the fairies believable by placing them in a realistic setting are some of the favorites, like "The Child Next Door," "Steeple-Sliding," and "Fairies."

#### Fyleman folklore

The criticism that her fairy lore is not always of the authentic or convincing variety is readily understood when you examine the poems carefully. All too often her magic creatures are the gossamer-winged, be-crowned, be-wanded fairies as in the poem just quoted.

Now and then, however, you do encounter poems that reflect the dim, secret half-world of folklore magic. "The Fairy Green," "The Island," "Fairies in the Malverns," "The Fairy Tailor," and "Dunsley Glen" contain the otherworldliness and mystery lacking in many of her poems. Certainly her "Singing Fairy" is a genuine denizen of another world:

#### THE SINGING FAIRY

*There was a fairy once  
Who lived alone  
In a mossy hole  
Under a stone.*

*Never abroad she went;  
Only at night  
When the moon was clear  
And the stars bright*

*High on the stone she stood,  
Lifted her head  
And stayed singing there  
Till the dark fled.*

*All the woods listened then,  
Not a leaf stirred;  
Sweeter far the song  
Than song of bird.*

From the standpoint of the children, any criticism of her sometimes sugary fairies is

indeed capacious. Children like their fairies "pretty" with fluttering wings, crowns, and wands, and they like them kind and surprising. The way Miss Fyleman has fairies popping up just anywhere—in the garden, steeple-sliding, on a motorbus, on the backs of bumble bees—delights the children. Such fanciful fairies, especially when they are produced on a large scale, may not be good folklore, and the resultant verses may seem made to order now and then, but children love these poems and learn them with wholehearted devotion.

Besides the fairy poems, Miss Fyleman has also written some amusing light verse about the modern child and the things he is interested in. Small children like her cheerful, four-line "Singing-Time," which tells about waking up in the morning. "Mrs. Brown," with her imaginary children, and "Mice," with its brevity and highly personal note, are both favorites. Since there are not many of these verses of the child's everyday concerns, it is chiefly as ambassador extraordinary to fairyland that the children value and remember Rose Fyleman.

#### Walter de la Mare, 1873-1956

##### Rhymes and Verses:

##### Collected Poems for Children

Adults and children of the English-speaking world lost a great lyric poet when Walter de la Mare died in Twickenham, England, on June 22, 1956. He was born in the little village of Charlton in Kent, England. When he was only seventeen, he finished his schooling and went into the London office of the Anglo-American (Standard) Oil Company. For eighteen years he worked in the statistical department of that company, during which time he wrote stories and poems and published them under the pseudonym of Walter Ramal. The treasured *Songs of Childhood* was published in 1902 when he was still engaged in this statistical work.

When he was thirty-five, he received a small civil pension and had sufficient income from book reviewing to enable him to retire

from business. Later an interesting legacy enabled him to drop all work except his own creative writing. When the English poet, Rupert Brooke, went into the war (1914), he made a will leaving his money and the proceeds of his books to be divided among three of his poet friends, Wilfrid Gibson, Lascelles Abercrombie, and Walter de la Mare. The terms of this generous bequest are particularly touching in view of the great gifts and promise of the donor. Speaking of his three friends, Rupert Brooke told his mother, "If I can set them free to any extent to write the poetry and plays and books they want to, my death will bring more gain than loss."<sup>1</sup> Rupert Brooke's death was a grievous loss to English letters, but Walter de la Mare's poetry and prose do honor to the foresight of the friend who recognized his worth.

Walter De la Mare's quiet family life is over now. But he has left behind him a rich legacy for future generations in both poetry and prose, for children and adults. If *Memoirs of a Midget* is brilliant fiction for mature readers, *The Three Royal Monkeys* (p. 331) is equally distinguished fantasy for children. If his adult poetry is frequently compared to William Blake's, many of his poems for children merit the same comparison and have, besides, a range and variety not found in Blake. That his work for children has the same beauty found in his books for grown-ups is not surprising when he himself says in his Introduction to *Bells and Grass*, "I know well that only the rarest kind of best in anything can be good enough for the young." If anyone has given children "the rarest kind of best" in poetry, it is Walter de la Mare.

All of his poems for young people are now collected in *Rhymes and Verses*,<sup>2</sup> from *Crossings*, *Poems for Children*, *Bells and Grass*, *This Year: Next Year*, *Peacock Pie*, *Doun-Adoun-Derry*, *Stuff and Nonsense*, and *A Child's Day*. Many of his poems are beyond the

<sup>1</sup>Edward Marsh, *Rupert Brooke, a Memoir*, p. 141.

<sup>2</sup>There is also *Come Huber, Mr. De la Mare's own selection of poems for children*.



comprehension of the average child. Nevertheless, this book yields a precious residue of pure poetry that no child should miss. You will be the richer for looking through all of them. Choose your favorite poems; try them with the children; then try certain others that are beautiful but that are not so sure to be enjoyed. Who knows what words will catch the imagination of children and set their spirits winging? When you are using the poetry of a great lyric poet, be adventurous and try a wide selection for the sake of that occasional child who may suddenly be carried out of himself by the magic of poetry.

### The unanswered question

One characteristic of Walter de la Mare's poems is the use of the unanswered question which leaves the reader wondering. Reading the gravely beautiful "The Horseman" (p. 160), you discover that the content is slight, the melody is utterly satisfying, but the picture it produces is an enigma. "Is it a knight?" "Maybe it's the moon." "Or maybe it's white clouds," the children say. Read this favorite:

#### SOME ONE

Some one came knocking  
At my wee, small door;  
Some one came knocking,  
I'm sure—sure—sure;  
I listened, I opened,  
I looked to left and right,  
But nought there was a-stirring  
In the still dark night;  
Only the busy beetle  
Tap-tapping in the wall,  
Only from the forest  
The screech-owl's call,  
Only the cricket whistling  
While the dewdrops fall,  
So I know not who came knocking,  
At all, at all, at all.

"But who *was* knocking?" the children ask and immediately start answering their own question. Walter de la Mare does this repeatedly. Whether he is writing for children or adults, many of his poems leave you possessed

and wondering. You keep on saying them, trying to find the answer from the poet himself, or, failing in this, supplying first one answer of your own and then another. Children speculate over "The Mocking Fairy," "Jim Jay," and "The Little Green Orchard," to mention only a few. Adults are similarly haunted by "The Song of the Secret," "The Song of Finis," and "Farewell."

Of course, too much ambiguity in children's literature may be a dangerous quality, children being rather literal creatures and liking things straight and plain. A little, however, stimulates their imagination and provokes not only a healthy speculation but the ability to transcend the factual and go over into the world of dreams. Some people make this same transition with music. Why not with poetry as well?

### The child's world

Walter de la Mare can be straight and plain when he wishes to, and his children are real flesh-and-blood children. The account of "Poor Henry" swallowing physic is as homely a bit of family life as you can find anywhere. Little Ann waking up and tumbling out of her bed in the morning is any child waking. Small children enjoy the matter-of-fact subject matter and the straightforward treatment of such poems as "Chicken," "The Cupboard," "Bread and Cherries," "Tired Tim," "The Bandog," "The Barber's," and the Elizabeth Ann parts of "A Child's Day." Even these poems for the youngest children are, however, illumined with little touches that invariably lift them above the commonplace. Listen to the amusing / sounds in the opening line of

#### CHICKEN

Clapping her platter stood plump Bess,  
And all across the green  
Came scampering in, on wing and claw  
Chickens fat and lean:—  
Dorking, Spaniard, Cochon China,  
Bantams sleek and small,  
Like feathers blown in a great wind,  
They came at Bessie's call.

Notice the admirable description of the dog Mopser's teeth in

#### THE BANDOG

Has anybody seen my Mopser?—

A comely dog is he,  
With hair of the colour of a Charles the Fifth,  
And teeth like ships at sea,  
His tail it curls straight upwards,  
His ears stand two abreast,  
And he answers to the simple name of Mopser,  
When civilly addressed.

Contrast the dragging words of "Tired Tim" with the gay, skipping "The Barber's":

#### TIRED TIM

Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him.  
He lags the long bright morning through,  
Ever so tired of nothing to do;  
He moons and mopes the livelong day,  
Nothing to think about, nothing to say;  
Up to bed with his candle to creep,  
Too tired to yawn, too tired to sleep:  
Poor tired Tim! It's sad for him.

#### THE BARBER'S

Gold locks, and black locks,  
Red locks and brown,  
Topknot to love-curl,  
The hair wisps down;  
Straight above the clear eyes,  
Rounded round the ears,  
Snip-snap and snick a snick,  
Flash the Barber's shears;  
Us, in the looking glass,  
Footsteps in the street,  
Over, under, to and fro,  
The lean blades meet;  
Bay Rum or Bear's Grease,  
A silver goot to pay—  
Then out a shin shan shining  
In the bright, blue day.

Walter de la Mare wrote many of these poems for his own children. He knows what catches their fancy and what jokes they like. So he sometimes gives them rare nonsense in the preposterous vein they appreciate, for example, "Alas, Alack!" (p. 125).

The poet has also discovered children's curious penchant for names. In nursery

schools they can be heard sometimes chanting each other's names, not for the sake of calling or addressing each other but just for fun: "Sandy Anderson, Sandy Anderson, Lois, Lois, Lois Calhoun." Walter de la Mare must have observed this delight in saying names, for he has written several poems using them. The introduction to "The Child's Day" and "O Dear Me!" are excellent examples of this amusing use of names and are pleasant little poems besides. Then there is the favorite

#### BUNCHES OF GRAPES

"Bunches of grapes," says Timothy;  
"Pomegranates pink," says Elaine;  
"A junket of cream and a cranberry tart  
For me," says Jane.  
"Love-in-a-mist," says Timothy;  
"Primroses pale," says Elaine;  
"A nosegay of pinks and mignonette  
For me," says Jane.  
"Chariots of gold," says Timothy;  
"Silvery wings," says Elaine;  
"A bumpity ride in a wagon of hay  
For me," says Jane.

This last poem illustrates another virtue in Walter de la Mare's children. They are indeed real, from pert little Mima and her taunting sister, to the hammering and sawing small boy who speaks from "The Little Green Orchard," and to the three children in "Bunches of Grapes." Can't you just see the three—Timothy, a gentle, dreamy boy; Elaine, fair, golden-haired, and dainty; and bouncing Jane, rosy and plumpish. These are children the poet knows, and we know them, too, from the verses.

#### The world of nature

There are many so-called "nature" poems in *Rhymes and Verses*. There are "The Hare," "Quack!" "Come-Gone," "The Warbler," "A Goldfinch," "Mrs. Earth," "The Pool in the Rock," "The Snowflake," "Silver," "Full Moon," "Wanderers" (the planets), "Snow," the simple and beautiful "The Rainbow," and many others. Throughout the poems you

find intimate glimpses of flowers, birds, beasts, the sea, and the countryside—all caught and colored with the poet's own peculiar insight. No poetry is more intensely visual than Walter de la Mare's. A "sun-washed drift of sea-birds," the "knobble-kneed" old donkey—"Nicholas Nye," "horned snails," "four-clawed moles," "moths like ghosties," a "martin's sun-baked nest," "rain-sweet lilac on the spray," the "yeasty surf," "sunshine sweet and pale," and, for contrast, those "chuffling" pigs making their "grizzling, gruzzling and greedy" sounds. Sometimes you feel as if Walter de la Mare shared his famous midget's ability to stand grass-high and look intimately at bluebells and beetles, cobwebs and dew-drops, so vividly does he record them.

### The world of fairy

Forrest Reid<sup>1</sup> characterizes Walter de la Mare's poetry by saying that it is chiefly "poetry of imagination and *vision* with its hints of loveliness belonging to a world perhaps remembered, perhaps only dreamed, but which at least is not *this* world." Certainly when you read *Rhymes and Verses*, you are impressed with the large number of fairy poems and with their great range of mood and style. They begin at nonsense level with such delightful absurdities as "Tillie," the old woman who swallowed some magic fern seeds when she yawned and has ever since been floating around on the wind.

#### TILLIE

Old Tillie Turveycombe  
Sat to sew,  
Just where a patch of fern did grow;  
There, as she yawned,  
And yawn wide did she,  
Floated some seed  
Down her gull-e-t;  
And look you once,  
And look you twice,  
Poor old Tillie  
Was gone in a trice.  
But oh, when the wind

Do a-moaning come,  
'Tis poor old Tillie  
Sick for home;  
And oh, when a voice  
In the mist do sigh,  
Old Tillie Turveycombe's  
Floating by.

Or for older children, there is that hilarious "The Dwarf," which is almost a study in laughter. "The Hare" is a favorite, also "Blue-bells," "The Ride-by-Nights," and the charming "Berries," "Sam," and "The Three Beggars." One of the children's favorite fairy poems is "Sleepyhead," with its interesting contrast between the child's matter-of-fact narrative and the wild, sweet singing of the "gnomies." By the way, this is one of those poems of which there are at least three variants in the different editions. The version given below was the first one, in the 1902 printing. It was called "The Gnomies" in that edition but is "Sleepyhead" in most of the books.

#### SLEEPYHEAD

As I lay awake in the white moonlight,  
I heard a faint singing in the wood—  
'Out of bed,  
Sleepyhead,  
Put your white foot now,  
Here are we,  
'Neath the tree  
Singing round the root now!

I looked out of the window in the white moon-  
light,  
The leaves were like snow in the wood—  
'Come away  
Child and play,  
Light wi' the gnomies;  
In a mound,  
Green and round,  
That's where their home is!  
Honey sweet,  
Curds to eat,  
Cream and frumènty,  
Shells and beads,  
Poppy seeds,  
You shall have plenty.'

But soon as I stooped in the dim moonlight  
To put on my stocking and my shoe,

<sup>1</sup>Forrest Reid, *Walter de la Mare: A Critical Study* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1929).

Illustration by Boris Artzybasheff for Walter de la Mare's "Sleepyhead" from *The Fairy Shoemaker* and *Other Fairy Poems*, Macmillan, 1928 (book 7¼ x 8½)



*Boris Artzybasheff's illustrations are often too stylized for children to enjoy.*

*This picture is an exception, because it is both stylized and an understandable interpretation.*

for children a body of lyric poetry that is unsurpassed. Written by a master, even the least of these songs has a haunting melody and grace that develops an ear for verbal music and teases the memory. The world of fairy predominates, but it can be balanced through careful selection of poems of the everyday child and his everyday world. If many of the poems leave you questioning, this, too, is good, for the mind and spirit can wax dull and need to be pricked into awareness now and then. Since the enigmatic is usually difficult for children, choose your selections with an eye to balancing types. Many of the poems tell a story and tell it with a dramatic thrill. This is one of their charms for children, from the humorous "Alas, Alack!" to the racing, chasing tale of "The Lost Shoe," the strange "The Pedlar," and poor old "Sam."

For yourself, read aloud "The Song of the Secret" ("Where is beauty?"), "The Song of the Mad Prince" (p. 189), "Fare Well" (found in *Collected Poems*), "The Journey" and "Known of Old." This last one might have been written by William Blake. These poems will give you something of Walter de la Mare not found in the simpler poetry emphasized here. But with the children, try a wide variety of the simpler poems. When you introduce a new one, repeat it several times, on different days, perhaps. You will abandon it only after the children repeatedly show no interest, make no comments, and never ask for it again. Then you should give it up and try something else. After all, Walter de la Mare has so rich an offering that there will be more than you can use. Never force an analysis of the content of these poems, but encourage any spon-

The sweet, sweet singing died sadly away,  
And the grey of the morning peep'd through:  
Then instead of the gnomies there came a red  
    robin

To sing of the buttercups and dew.

If you read all of the poems mentioned in this group and add "Melmillio," "Bewitched," "The Pedlar," "As Lucy Went A-Walking," and half a dozen others, you soon discover that here are no fairies with gauzy wings and jeweled wands, but rather the witches, the dwarfs, the occasionally droll, homely wee men of ancient folklore. If you have not seen witches that "straddled their brooms 'neath a louring sky," or met at twilight a strange pedlar with "glittering eyes" and a "sugared song," you feel as if you *might* at any moment, once you have read these poems. Too many of them make, perhaps, too highly spiced a literary diet for children, but the simpler ones mentioned in the first group are among the most authentic poems of fairy lore that we have for children.

#### Using the poems with children

Although many poems in these books of Walter de la Mare belong to the adult world of dreams and imagination, there still remains

taneous speculations on the part of the children. Remember that the chief appeal of such poetry is to the ear, the emotions, and the imagination. Who can analyze a melody, or put into words promptly something that has suddenly flashed a light in his imagination or set his spirit soaring? Yet these are precisely what Walter de la Mare's poems can do for you and for children. They can put a spell upon you, a spell compounded of wonder, melody, and sheer beauty.

Here, then, are some of the poets who have written seriously for children in words that sing. Not all of them have been gifted with lyric genius, but each one of them has made a contribution which serves to underscore the fact that *children like authentic poetry*. If the lesser of our poets are at first more popular with the children than our major poets, it is because they are direct and clear; they choose subjects children can understand easily, and they treat them briefly and cheerfully. These are standards we must respect in our choice of verse for children. We must remember that they turn away from obscurity in a poem; that they will endure length only in narrative verse that is swift-moving and exciting; and that, in general, they shun the somber mood. So lyric poets who catch their favor generally do so with poetry that is brief and gay, or markedly melodious.

Allowing for these preferences, we can select for children a lyric offering that has variety and charm. Shakespeare with his blithe songs, William Blake with his strange and subtle melodies, Christina Rossetti with her small perfect lyrics—these older writers speak as freshly to children today as they ever did. Sara Teasdale, Elizabeth Coatsworth, and Hilda Conkling share with the child their delight in the face of nature, her moods and surprises. William Allingham, Rose Fyleman, and Walter de la Mare carry children over into that half-world of fairy so vividly, so convincingly, that even the modern child sees, hears, and is charmed. Of them all, Walter de la Mare is the poet to grow

on—to begin with at three years, to study, to say over, and to be haunted by, until we too sing "The Song of Finis." To the lyrics of these poets we can add selections from Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Langston Hughes, and a dozen others. No other language has such a heritage of lyric poetry for children as our English poetry offers. It is our unique treasure. Paul Hazard writes:

With the Latins, and especially with the French, poetry remains a luxury not to be dealt with before a certain age. It is a rational pleasure that must be clearly understood. The idea of a fascination where there is nothing to understand, just fantasy, resonance and rhyme, seems lunacy to them. Consequently no poetry was provided for the children unless they were assigned some mournfully puerile verses written, perhaps, by experienced adults, or some of La Fontaine's *Fables* that were much too difficult for them as we well know. And let them be satisfied with that until they are old enough to learn to compose Alexandrines.<sup>1</sup>

It is our responsibility to know this heritage of lyric poetry and to use it to the fullest possible extent. We shall encounter certain children who have no ear for word sounds or the subtleties of metrical cadence, and who lack the imaginative reach demanded by poetry. For them, we shall find humorous poems which they like and which will carry them a little further in their enjoyment of verse. However, just as we add music by Brahms or Chopin to the simple music we play for children, so we shall introduce some of the fine lyric poems into our poetry offering for children. Many children will respond to them immediately. Others may make no comment at the time, but will later come up and ask to see the book for themselves. Try and try again the best poetry you can find with any group of children you have, because you never know when some bit of verbal magic will fill a child with inexplicable delight, speaking suddenly and intimately to his inner self.

<sup>1</sup>Paul Hazard, *Books, Children and Men*, p. 83.

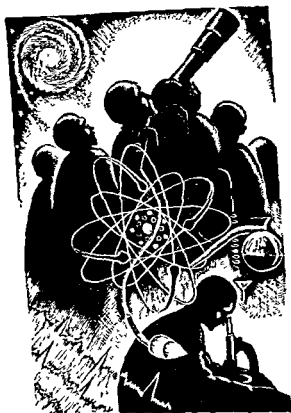


Illustration by Clare Leighton for  
*Imagination's Other Place* edited by Helen  
Plotz, Crowell, 1955 (book & a B's)

*There could have been no happier choice of illustrator for this remarkable anthology than Clare Leighton, a master of design. Here, the upturned faces, slanting lines, and glaring white spaces against the black carry not only the eye but the imagination upward with the telescope. Her striking pictures for this book use both mass and line to induce a feeling or to suggest an idea.*

*What is Poetry? Who knows?*

*Not the rose, but the scent of the rose;  
Not the sky, but the light in the sky;  
Not the fly, but the gleam of the fly;  
Not the sea, but the sound of the sea;  
Not myself, but what makes me  
See, hear, and feel something that prose  
Cannot: and what it is, who knows?*

So writes Eleanor Farjeon, herself a poet but also the author of prose stories, drama, and a delightful autobiography. What is she saying about poetry except that it provides a pungent distillation of experience? Not the rose but the very essence of rose, the glory of the sky, what the sea makes us hear and feel! Such distinctions between poetry and prose are of no interest to children, but a series of them might throw some light on the manner in which adults should present poetry to children successfully. For instance,

in her book, *Beauty: An Interpretation of Art and the Imaginative Life*, Helen Parkhurst says:

*The difference between prose and poetry is the difference between the speaking voice and the singing—two things qualitatively distinct, and yet incapable of exact description. But though distinct, they comprehend a wide range of gradations that intervene between them....*

*Just as prose is the domain of speech, and poetry that of song, so this place between might be called the no man's land where belong the freer forms of verse and the more lyrical sorts of prose. (pp. 205-206)*

Here are a few definitions of poetry:

*Absolute poetry is the concrete and artistic expression of the human mind in emotional and rhythmical language.*

—Encyclopaedia Britannica

*Poetry is the music of the soul; and, above all, of great and feeling souls.*

—Voltaire

*The essence of poetry is invention; such invention as, by producing something unexpected, surprises and delights.*—Samuel Johnson

*If I read a book and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?*

—Emily Dickinson

*Poetry is the language of feeling, prose of the intellect.*

—Benedetto Croce

## Elements of good poetry

But how about adults who enjoy doggerel, and children who accept anything that rhymes? Does their enjoyment make the jingles they read poetry? Perhaps for them it does temporarily, but doggerel need not remain their top level of appreciation. Good taste in any field—music, interior decoration, clothes, poetry—is a matter of experience. As a person becomes familiar with the best in one field, he gains discrimination there, while in another field in which his experience is limited he may show very poor taste. So we should be patient with children's enjoyment

*A living poem begins with a lump in the throat; a homesickness or a lovesickness. It is a reaching out toward expression to find fulfillment. A complete poem is one where an emotion has found its thought and the thought has found words.*

—Robert Frost

*I always know it is a good poem when the small hairs rise on the back of my neck.*

—William Rose Benét

If you examine these definitions and others, you will discover certain ideas recurring: poetry surprises and delights; it sings like music; it makes you feel intensely; poetry gives you an arresting thought in rhythmic words, plus a shiver up your backbone. When poetry means these things to you, you have genuinely enjoyed it; it is poetry to you. When it leaves you just where you were, neither aroused nor amused, neither enchanted nor solaced, then poetry has not happened to you; it has passed you by. So with children, when poetry leaves them puzzled or apathetic, they have not tasted poetry. If they laugh and say, "Sing it again," or if their eyes shine and they become suddenly as quiet as mice, poetry has taken hold of them. In that moment of identification with the poet's thought, personalities expand and spirits grow. From such an experience with poetry, children and grown-ups return to their everyday affairs happier, warmer, perhaps even a bit wiser.

of poor poetry. Their taste will improve if they have repeated experiences with good poetry. This means that grown-ups must know what is good and also must be able to recognize the characteristics of hackneyed doggerel not worth the children's time or attention.

### Singing quality: melody and movement

The last five chapters have brought out some of the elements characteristic of good poetry. One of the most important of these is its

singing quality or, to be more specific, its melody and movement. In the nonsense jingles and humorous verse, for example, words and lines trip along with the lightness of children jumping rope. Clumsy doggerel—in contrast to the verses of Lear, Richards, and Milne—is heavy-footed, and its words and lines have no sparkle. If a poem is in a mysterious or meditative or wistful mood, the lines move slowly and the words fall subtly on the ear. The poems of Blake, Rossetti, and De la Mare contain many examples of the perfect accompaniment of melody and movement to mood. On the whole, the lyrical quality of the poetry children like is more lively and dancing than poetry for adults—no blank verse for children and very little free verse. The fact that children enjoy marked rhythms and crisp rhymes accounts for their ready acceptance of second-rate verse if it has these characteristics. But if in childhood their ears become attuned to the subtleties and varieties of rhythmic patterns found in poems like those by Stevenson, De la Mare, and Behn, they will readily detect the labored rhythms and forced rhymes which characterize masses of mediocre verse.

### Words of poetry

Most of the poems already discussed use strong, vigorous words or warm, rich words or delicate, precise words—words that define with accurate perfection. Of course, prose may employ the same words, but in poetry they are ordinarily used with greater condensation and in more melodious combinations so that the effect is more striking. Remember, in "Green Moth," Winifred Welles' use of *still*—a word which becomes the very essence of mystery, creating within the two stanzas a quiet, lovely melody. Remember, too, the amusing "sneezles and freezles" of Christopher Robin, or Blake's "the echoing green," which suggests the calls and shouts of children at their play. Go through these poems to find both the exact, descriptive words, and the sensory and associative words and phrases which distinguish good poetry from the or-

inary: "the still dark night," "skipping along alone," "rain in the city" falling "slantwise where the buildings crowd," "soaked, sweet-smelling lane," "Apple trees are snowing." Words that stir the imagination, that speak to the senses, that provoke laughter, that move you deeply and strongly, although you cannot say why—such words are part of the secret of good poetry.

### Content of poetry

While poetry is primarily emotional in its appeal, it is built around subjects or ideas, and appeals to the intellect also. Even a slight verse like "Little Miss Muffet" has a well-defined idea—security, fright, escape. The child's emotional response to this unit depends upon his grasp of the content. Of course juvenile poetry, as well as adult poetry, may have almost as varied subject matter as prose, but like any of the other arts, it must invest that content with arresting significance. A slippery baby in a bathtub is Carl Sandburg's "fish child." Rachel Field sees city "Taxis"—"Scudding through the snow," "flashing back the sun," and rolling along "like spools of colored thread." A vivid picture to city children! When mother cooks fish, the child chuckles over the memory of De la Mare's "a fish that *talks* in the frying pan." Looking at the new buds on the oak tree, he discovers that they are, indeed, "no larger than a mouse's ear." So poetry takes the strange or everyday facts of life and gives them fresh meaning. We see new colors in the world because poetry has revealed them.

When we choose a new poem for children we may well test it by asking ourselves these questions. *First, does it sing*—with good rhythm, true unforced rhymes, and a happy compatibility of sound and subject—whether it is nonsense verse or narrative or lyric poetry? *Second, is the diction distinguished*—with words that are rich in sensory and associative meanings, words that are unhackneyed, precise, and memorable? *Third, does the subject matter of the poem invest the strange or the everyday experiences of life with new im-*



portance and richer meaning? When a poem does these three things, it is indeed good poetry—it may add to the child's day one

## Why poetry is difficult for children

Many people, however, do not enjoy poetry. When college students are asked why so few of them read poetry voluntarily, their responses each year are invariably the same: They had too much analyzing of poems assigned for study, or they were given many selections that were boring. "Lots of poems are too long," they complain, or "Poetry is hard to understand and it's hard to read." Sometimes, when poetry is read aloud to children or young people, it is badly read—in a dull singsong or with unnatural affectations or with a "holy tone," any one of which is enough to induce a permanent distaste for poetry in the unhappy listeners. Here, then, are some clues to the rather general prejudice against poetry: it is hard to understand; it is hard to read; it is often too long; it has not always been well presented. We might as well face the issue frankly in order to see what we can do to avoid these unfortunate results, and keep alive the child's hearty and unself-conscious delight in hearing and saying poetry.

### Subject matter

Many children have learned to distrust the subject matter of poetry largely because of our blundering choice of selections for them. We have given them pedantic verse designed to teach manners or morals or safety or health. Jack and Jill fell down because they didn't look both ways before they started up the hill. "Mary, Mary, quite contrary" went to her garden, but instead of "silver bells and cockle shells," she found spinach, perhaps, or some carrots bursting with vitamins. These are abominations, both as verse and as lessons.

Then we have given children poems that voice the philosophy of old age rather than that of exuberant childhood:

brief moment of laughter, or give him a new dream to dream over in solitude, or leave him with a sharpened awareness of life.

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,  
Life is but an empty dream!

So speaks middle age, or perhaps dreams  
wistfully of Innisfree:

*I shall have some peace there, for peace comes  
dropping slow.*

But what of the child? Certainly the last thing he wants is peace. What he yearns for is action, and if we are going to foster children's natural liking for poetry we had better avoid these elderly daydreams and find selections that speak of the child's world.

We have also given children poetry whose meaning is obscure. If these obscurities cannot be cleared up in a brief discussion, then we should drop such poems for the time being. A selection may be great literature, but if it leaves the children baffled and suspicious, it is not good literature for them at that point. Take, for instance, Walter de la Mare's exquisite "The Song of the Mad Prince," which one distinguished text on children's literature suggests that a child might enjoy by himself.

### THE SONG OF THE MAD PRINCE

Who said, 'Peacock Pie?  
The old King to the sparrow:  
Who said, 'Crops are ripe?  
Rust to the harrow:  
Who said, 'Where sleeps she now?  
Where rests she now her head,  
Bathed in eve's loveliness?'  
That's what I said.  
Who said, 'Ay, mum's the word'?  
Sexton to willow:  
Who said, 'Green dusk for dreams,  
Moss for a pillow?  
Who said, 'All Time's delight  
Hath she for narrow bed;  
Life's troubled bubble broken'?  
That's what I said.

What does it mean to you? Does it not speak of Hamlet and Ophelia more poignantly than any critique ever written? But *what* would it mean to a child? Sheer beauty of sound, of course, but a child old enough to read this for himself will wish to know what it means, what it is about, and when he does know, the poem is infinitely more moving.

Should we not, then, in choosing poetry for children, select poems whose subject matter is sufficiently common to the experiences and emotions of children so that they can understand what the poem is about and share the feeling behind the words? Of course, we need not be too literal about this. The child need not have shared every experience he encounters in poetry, but there should be a region of common ground between the two—the child and the poem.

The city child, for example, may not know meadows and cowslips, but he knows all about trying to decide where to go; so he understands this little conversation piece by Kate Greenaway:

#### SUSAN BLUE

Oh! Susan Blue,  
How do you do?  
Please may I go for a walk with you?  
Where shall we go?  
Oh! I know—  
Down in the meadow where the cowslips grow!

The city child might make his own ending and say, "Over in the park where the tulips grow," or "Over on the hill to slide in the snow." So, too, the child may never have had a ride on a merry-go-round, but the sense of action that Dorothy Baruch's irresistible "Merry-Go-Round" (p. 157) gives him will make it joyously comprehensible.

#### Figures of speech

Frequent use of figures of speech has proved particularly baffling to young children. Blanche Weekes, in a study called *Influence of Meaning on Children's Choices of Poetry*, found that the literal-minded child does not understand most figures of speech and tends

to misinterpret them rather consistently. Sixth-grade children, for instance, interpreted "the lion of thunder roared" to mean that the lion roared at the thunder. So if the young child hears a poem about the stars looking like daisies that "dot the meadows of the night," he may visualize a topsy-turvy world with daisies sticking head-first down from heaven instead of popping up from the ground as self-respecting daisies should. Indeed, a group of college students who were asked if they, as children, ever understood the elaborate last verse explanation of "Wynken, Blynken, and Nod," all confessed that they had neither understood nor liked the last verse and had never thought of the "fishermen three" as anything except three elflike men who sailed in a wooden shoe on a misty "sea of dew." In short, involved figures of speech are more likely to muddle than to inspire the young. One reason Dorothy Aldis and A. A. Milne are successful with young children is that they rarely use figurative language, but maintain an understandable directness most of the time.

Not that we are herewith going to abandon every poem for children that uses figurative language—not at all. But it is safe to say that the younger the child the fewer and simpler the figures of speech should be, particularly since many of them are decidedly platitudinous. Magazines abound with endless ditties about mewing pussy willows, sprightly Jacky Frost, and willful autumn leaves—outworn juvenile clichés which can well be discarded. In choosing a figurative poem for children, be sure, first of all, that it is clever verse or authentic poetry and that the figures of speech are brief and understandable.

#### Long descriptions

Long descriptions are another stumbling block to an easy enjoyment of poetry. Children have always skipped descriptions in prose, and they have always spoken out fully and frankly about how much they dislike them. Yet adults have never hesitated to give

them poetry that is little else. One older boy who said he hated poetry was asked why and replied promptly, "Oh, it's got so many words. It just describes and describes!" Most children like a story, but too many words swamp them. Subtle descriptive phrases make a verbal maze for them that leaves them baffled and lost. There is little doubt that children have been overwhelmed with too many poems of nature description while they were still too young to enjoy them. They will take a few if they are mercifully brief, but too many and too long descriptions will send them away from poetry bored and discouraged. It is hard for adults to accept this sad fact, for they have learned to enjoy such poems as Wordsworth's "Daffodils" and hope to share that enjoyment with children. So they may—when the children have grown up. Meanwhile, slip in occasional brief poems of nature descriptions and children will begin to like them, even though they may arouse little enthusiasm at first.

### Form

The form of poetry presents even more reading problems than the content. The mere look of a page of poetry is strange with its short lines and stanza patterns, so different in appearance from a page of prose. Attacking it

gingerly, the child encounters both rhythm and rhyme, which do odd things to his reading. For instance, they heighten the child's tendency to pause at the end of each line, usually marked by dropping the voice. This, in turn, results not only in singsong but frequently in destroying the meaning.

Inverted sentences also cause singsong reading and a consequent loss of meaning. Read these lines of Stevenson's:

When to go out, my nurse doth wrap  
Me in my comforter and cap . . .

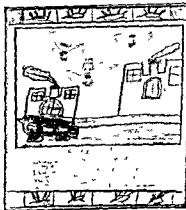
Drop your voice conclusively after "wrap," and you have a strange second line. Or if the poet delays the completion of his sentence for several lines, the unwary reader is immediately befuddled. Take, for example, the familiar opening lines of William Cullen Bryant's "To a Waterfowl":

Whither, 'midst falling dew,  
While glow the heavens with the last steps  
of day,  
Far, through their rosy depths, dost thou pursue  
Thy solitary way?

The exclamatory question that begins with the first word, "Whither," is never completed until you reach "dost thou pursue thy solitary way!" and this conclusion is distributed over two lines. Such examples emphasize the pit-

Illustrations by children in the East Cleveland Public Schools

*These pictures may be crude, but they show that the young artists have understood and enjoyed the poems the drawings illustrate. "The Crooked Man" is indeed crooked, the fairy queen drawn for "Yesterday in Oxford Street" is obviously a queen, and certainly the goblin for "Overheard on a Saltmarsh" is a devilish-looking fellow. Mayfair School, first and second grades; teacher, Miss Ada L. Hauck.*



falls that await the unwary reader of verse. When the child gets lost in such entanglements, he knows he isn't making sense and he becomes suspicious of this thing called poetry.

### Dialogue

Dialogue is another source of trouble in verse, because the poets have a way of blithely omitting the helpful "said he" or "said she." Look at the little conversation piece by Kate Greenaway (p. 190). Does Susan Blue's unknown friend speak all the lines, or does Susan herself break in with the question and then the joyous solution of the last two lines? This latter interpretation turns the poem into a charming little dialogue which seems sufficiently appealing to justify such a reading. Consider the popular but still more confusing dialogue Harold Monro has given us in "Overheard on a Saltmarsh." It is a conversation between a goblin and a nymph, but the poem never gives you a single "said the nymph" or "said the goblin." You have to catch this change of speakers from the context. The same thing is true of Blake's imaginary dialogue between an adult and a

tiny baby. The words are simple, but it is not always easy to tell who says what. Read the poem aloud with the proper interpretation of the dialogue, and it is immediately understandable.

### INFANT JOY

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| Baby     | "I have no name;<br>I am but two days old." |
| Narrator | What shall I call thee?                     |
| Baby     | "I happy am,<br>Joy is my name."            |
| Narrator | Sweet joy befall thee!                      |
| Narrator | Pretty joy!                                 |
|          | Sweet joy, but two days old.                |
|          | Sweet joy I call thee;                      |
|          | Thou dost smile,                            |
|          | I sing the while;                           |
|          | Sweet joy befall thee!                      |

Of course, children cannot figure out this complex dialogue for themselves, but if they hear it properly read, they can follow the two speaking parts and can say it intelligently or read it on their own. Children learning to read should get most of their poetry through their ears before they are asked to cope with it on the printed page.

## To make poetry-lovers of children

### What children like about poetry

This brings us to the heart of the difficulty and the delight of using poetry with children. We must know what they like about it and how to expose them to it so the liking grows. Fortunately, its first and strongest appeal is its *singing quality*, the *melody and movement* of the word patterns and the lines. "Tune and runningness" Walter de la Mare calls these qualities, and they make poetry an aural art like music, to be heard and spoken just as music is to be heard and played. Our business as adults is to savor this singing quality of verse and learn how to bring it out in our reading.

Next, children like the *story element* in poetry, from "Little Miss Muffet" to "The

Highwayman." This is so strong an interest that we should search for fine narrative poetry for every age level. Children will accept the feeblest doggerel if it tells a story. Often the surprising and provocative little story suggestions in the lyric poetry of Walter de la Mare may account for the children's enjoying subtler and lovelier verse than they would otherwise appreciate. Perhaps some of the gifted modern poets will respond to this need and write some stirring narrative poems of the quality of "The Pied Piper."

The *sensory content* of poetry constitutes one of its strongest appeals, or, in some cases, accounts for its failure with certain children. If the sensory content is familiar or understandable, then they respond with zest to the words of seeing, smelling, feeling, hearing,

and tasting with which poetry abounds. Unfortunately, over half the children in the United States are from urban areas while a large proportion of English poetry is distinctly rural in its sensuous imagery. The city child and the country child have certain experiences in common—wind, rain, snow, sun, moon, stars, heat, cold, fog—but how differently these experiences impinge on the consciousness of each of them. Take snow, for instance, which in the crowded areas of the city is soon a blackish, soggy slush. How, then, can the city child, who knows neither down, nor lambs, nor even clean, soft snow, respond to the feeling of stepping upon "white down," of walking upon "silver fleece," as described in Elinor Wylie's "Velvet Shoes"? By the time these are laboriously explained to him, there is not much left of the dreamlike quality of that walk

*At a tranquil pace,  
Under veils of white lace.*

Sometimes it seems as if more time should be spent in providing city children with some of the lovely sensory experiences that crowded city streets deny them. The parks and public gardens are trying to do this; the problem is to get the children out of our classrooms occasionally to explore these little green oases. Somewhere, children should see frisky lambskins and young colts at play. They should smell the good smells of the earth after a spring rain, and bury their noses in lilacs and in lilies of the valley. They should taste the sweetness of wild strawberries and the sourness of apples pulled off the tree too soon. They should watch a dragonfly alight on a water lily in hot sunshine, and turtles in a row on a log, and the little silver sparkles of minnows close to shore. They should hear an old bullfrog's booming bass in the evening, and young roosters at dawn, and a wood thrush singing in the twilight. They should have the fun of plopping through mud, wading creeks, getting lost in a cornfield, whooping down a hillside on a windy autumn day. These are some of the rich sensory experi-

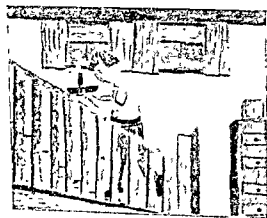
ences to which every child is entitled. Such experiences add immeasurably to the individual's capacity for enjoying life anywhere, always, as long as he lives. They are also the very stuff of which dreams are made, and the key to better understanding of poetry, music, all the arts. Of course, a child can enjoy life and art without such experiences, just as he can enjoy life and art although he is crippled; but he could enjoy them more with better equipment.

Teachers cannot provide every child with all these experiences, but they can provide him with a few more than he might have otherwise. And they can capitalize upon those he has had—skyscrapers against the clouds, for instance, or the lights of crowded city streets, rain at night with red and green lights reflected on the shining pavements, the roar of the city with all the lesser noises sharp and distinct and near at hand, the wind that shrills round the tall buildings and sends us scuttling and leaning against its strength. These are good experiences, too, and worth savoring. Perhaps with half of the world gone urban, there will be more of these than frisky lambs in the poetry of the future. Meanwhile, Miss Parkhurst reiterates a plea for the enjoyment of many and diverse sensory experiences when she says that

... only those individuals so constituted as to experience in youth a kind of pagan rapture from the intensification of bodily processes under the stimulus of walking, of running, of battling with the wind or water under the wet sting of hail or snow, or the dry heat of sunshine, could ever become, in all after years, full candidates for the completest aesthetic delights. (p. 266)

### **Poetry should be heard**

The very young child who enjoys poetry naturally does so because he has not yet been pestered with the mechanical difficulties of reading it for himself, but has met poetry as it was originally intended that everyone should meet it—through the ears rather than through the eyes. For a long time, all poetry



Illustrations by children in the Cleveland Schools

"The Flower-Cart Man" and "Tired Tim" (p. 182) are the poems these young Cleveland artists have chosen for illustration. The first picture has caught something of the gaiety of Rachel Field's herald of spring. And the second shows Tim, appropriately lethargic, creeping bedward.

(1) St. Thomas School, (2) Moses Cleveland School

to struggle with a poem as a reading lesson, they are baffled and discouraged. But they like it instantly when it is first presented to them orally by an adult who has said it so many times that she understands just how to bring out its meaning even while she makes it sing. They understand it without ever dreaming that it is "hard." After hearing and comprehending it, they can read it for themselves with comfort. Young eyes balk at the strange printed pattern of verse; young ears respond with delight to its pleasant cadence. John Erskine, writing with older students in mind, says in *The Kinds of Poetry*: "The office of the teacher of poetry is easily defined; it is to afford a mediation between great poets and their audience." With children, effective oral reading is the surest mediation.

The poets themselves agree. At the turn of the century, the Irish poet William Butler Yeats wrote:

*I have just heard a poem spoken with so delicate a sense of its rhythm, with so perfect a respect for its meaning, that if I were a wise man and could persuade a few people to learn the art I would never again open a book of verse.*<sup>1</sup>

Yeats implies that to read a poem silently is to miss the potent appeal of its music and perhaps even its meaning. He himself read poetry with spell-binding charm, and John Masefield in his autobiography, *So Long to Learn*, testifies to Yeats' powerful influence on the young poets of the day. He convinced them of the importance of the aural effect of poetry on the oral reader or listener. Later

<sup>1</sup>William Butler Yeats, *Ideas of Good and Evil* (New York: Macmillan, 1907), p. 16.

was composed for saying, and what people heard and enjoyed they learned and passed on to others orally. So adults should begin poetry with the small child, saying it to him, reading it to him, encouraging him to join in and say it, too. All too soon, this pleasant reading aloud or saying poems gives way to a mistaken effort to force young children to read laboriously what they can listen to and repeat easily with gaiety and zest. Saying or reading poetry to children should continue all through their first twelve years. By that time they will have mastered the mechanics of reading for themselves; they will also be steeped in poetry; and they will have the habit of saying it so well established that they will go right on reading it and enjoying it by themselves.

Poetry should never be used as a reading exercise. For this reason some basic readers for the elementary school omit poetry from their contents altogether. When children have

Robert Frost, in a series of cryptic comments on poetry, said:

*The eye reader is a barbarian. So also is the writer for the eye reader, who needn't care how badly he writes since he doesn't care how badly he is read.*

If, then, grown-ups wish to make poetry-lovers of children, they must approach poetry much as they would music. Let the child hear, day after day, casually, for sheer delight, all sorts of poems which are within his range of understanding and enjoyment. From the beginning, encourage him to speak the words with you as you read and reread the poem over a number of days. In this way the child will learn poetry with marked melody and movement almost effortlessly, and in less time than it takes him to learn a song. When the fives and sixes demand of the reader "Sing it again," it is their unconscious tribute to the fact that poetry *is* music to their ears, music made with words and word patterns instead of notes.

*Mother Goose* is a natural starting point with children from two to six or seven years old. Her pages are alive with "tune and runningness" and the children respond with vigor. They soon discover that "Ride a cock horse" is a gallop and "To market, to market" is an everyday walk, quite unlike the military tread of "The grand Old Duke of York." Children may try marching, skipping, galloping, hopping, running, rocking their babies, with most of the group speaking the poem while two or three respond to its rhythm. They don't know that it is meter and rhyme, line and word patterns that produce these contagious rhythms, but they feel the "goingness" of the verses. They discover that the words hop like the rabbit in Christina Rossetti's

And timid, funny, brisk little bunny,  
Winks his nose and sits all sunny.

And as they enjoy more difficult poetry they may, if they hear it properly read, sense the contrasting movements of Elizabeth Coats-

worth's "Swift things are beautiful" with its own second verse, "And slow things are beautiful." So Walter de la Mare's "Tired Tim" drags and mopes with every word, but the words of Ivy Eastwick's "Shadow Dance" prance as jubilantly as the little boy in his pajamas posturing in front of the fire.

The introduction to poetry for older children should begin as painlessly as it begins for the non-readers. That is, they should hear many poems read aloud vigorously for sheer pleasure, with no analysis during this exploratory stage. As this casual exposure to a variety of verses continues, lovely bits of authentic poetry should be slipped in and introduced with a comment like this: "A new poem is like new music. Sometimes you have to hear it several times before you know whether or not you like it." Children of eight or older should not be asked to respond with bodily rhythms to poetry, but they may well identify the gallop of Stevenson's "Windy Nights" or the clacking rhythm of the trains in Mary Austin's "Texas Trains and Trails." So, too, they will show you by their response that they feel the tranquility of Langston Hughes' "April Rain Song" or Elizabeth Madox Roberts' "Evening Hymn," even though they cannot analyze the mood in words.

Just as young children begin to chant *Mother Goose* ditties with you, so the big boys and girls should begin to speak their favorites as you read. A new poem should always be read several times when you first present it, and then reread on successive days. By the second day, if the children obviously enjoy the poem, it is time to say, "I saw some of your lips moving, so I think you partly know the poem. I'll read it slowly, and you say the words with me." Try this for a few days, and they will memorize a poem with the maximum enjoyment and the minimum effort. Don't let them memorize only the humorous verse, as they may begin to do, but encourage this painless mastery of a variety of verses with special emphasis on quality.

It may be asked, "How long must children have their poetry read to them? Aren't they

ever going to explore books of poetry on their own?" Of course they are! That is what this program is for. If, during the years when they are still trying to master their reading skills, children hear poetry well read by someone who thoroughly enjoys it, they too enjoy it unabashedly and begin to accept it as naturally as they accept stories. If they hear enough authentic poetry over these formative years, they will never suffer from what the poet W. H. Auden calls a "tin ear"<sup>1</sup> for merely tin-pan verses. Instead they will develop, or at least some of them will, a sensitivity to the beauty and power of the spoken word in the melodic combinations of poetry.

This sensitivity will grow as they hear and speak more authentic poetry. After this casual saturation with better and better verse, most of the children will begin to come up with poems they have discovered for themselves. "Here's a poem I found," one will say, adding shyly, "Do you like it?" Of course you do, even if it does not quite come up to the lyrics

## How to read poetry aloud

There is no doubt that this program of reading poetry aloud to children puts a heavy responsibility on adults, and the question is often asked, "How can a person with little knowledge of poetry and less of oral interpretation learn to read poetry acceptably?" The nonsense ditties of Mother Goose, Lear, and Laura Richards, with their crisp or explosive consonants and brisk rhythms, force the reader into vigorous, agile speech and give him a sense of tempo and variety. When you try the subtle lyrics of Blake, Rossetti, or De la Mare, something more than vigor and swing is required. These demand from the reader imagination and a delicate precision of interpretation. To acquire this precision, always read these poems aloud and try first of all to get the general mood or feeling. Obviously, Blake's "Laughing Song" (p. 166) carries a

you have been reading to him. And it must be noted that, just as a few children never develop an ear for any music except the most obvious sort, so there will be an occasional child who has no ear for words. But some children will be asking for a favorite poetry anthology as a Christmas present. Another child will discover poetry on the family book shelves (if there are any family book shelves), and begin to read for himself. Poetry readings on radio, television, or records may catch the attention of the occasional child. But in the classroom, by the time he is eleven or twelve and a competent reader, he may and will explore books of poetry for himself, and he will wish to share his favorites with the group. Reading poetry aloud will be a natural and habitual practice. This is the goal of the oral and aural approach to poetry. When it succeeds, children will enter high school with trained ears and clear, forthright diction, able to interpret intelligently the major poets to whom they will be exposed.

gentle gaiety with it; listen to your own reading and see if you hear the suggestion (and only a suggestion) of laughter growing and finally coming to a climax in the last line. "Some One" (p. 181) by De la Mare is mysterious and hushed—you can almost hear the speaker listening and whispering his speculations about the unseen knocker-at-his-door.

You make many such discoveries when you read poetry aloud, because skilled poets are writing for the ear, and they employ melody and movement consciously for specific ends. Sometimes melody and movement are used to suggest the action described in the poem. Sometimes they help to establish the mood of the poem, or they may even furnish clues to its meaning. When you read a poem aloud, therefore, you catch elements you miss when you read it silently, and the second time you try it orally you will interpret it better because you understand it better. Try these examples and see for yourself.

<sup>1</sup>W. H. Auden, "An Appreciation of the Lyric Verse of Walter de la Mare." *New York Times Book Review*, Feb. 26, 1956, p. 3.



Illustration by Robert Lawson for *Gaily We Parade*  
edited by John Brewton, Macmillan, 1940  
(book 6 x 9, picture 4 x 4½)

*Lawson, with a fine pen for details, pays  
a tribute to the lure of music.*



*Melody and movement suggest action.*  
Read aloud Dorothy Baruch's "Merry-Go-Round" (p. 157), and you discover that the carousel winds up, gains momentum, and obviously runs down to a full stop as her line patterns suggest. Or read aloud the running of the rats in Browning's "Pied Piper of Hamelin"—

*And the muttering grew to a grumbling;  
And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;  
And out of the house the rats came tumbling.  
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,  
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,  
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,*

*Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,  
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,*

*Families by tens and dozens,  
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives—  
Followed the Piper for their lues.*

As you read, you find yourself biting off the words in fine staccato style and gaining momentum as the thunderous race goes on. This is quite different from the broken, tripping, skipping, helter-skelter of the children's procession later in the poem. In still sharper contrast is this Greek lament, written over two thousand years ago, for a little dog. It moves slowly, gravely.

#### A MALTESE DOG

*He came from Malta; and Eumêlus says  
He had no better dog in all his days.  
We called him Bull; he went into the dark.  
Along those roads we cannot hear him bark.*

*Tyrrnes (2nd century B.C.): translated  
from the Greek by Edmund Blunden*

This suggests the broken, halting movement of Ravel's music, "Pavane for a Dead Princess," and the melody is in the same minor key. These auditory qualities force you to a very different reading than you would use for the spinning music of Edna St. Vincent Mil-

lay's "The Ballad of the Harp-Weaver" or the nonsense of Milne's "The King's Breakfast."

*Melody and movement help to establish mood.* A galloping rhythm suggests excitement, and in Stevenson's "Windy Nights" it heightens the mystery of the unseen rider. In Browning's "How They Brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix" it makes the ride almost unbearably exciting and full of suspense. And in Alfred Noyes' "The Highwayman" it adds enormously to the romantic thrill and tragedy of that perennial favorite. But there are subtler rhythms and tunes that are just as potent. Read Langston Hughes' "April Rain Song" slowly, thoughtfully, and feel the tranquility it induces.

*Let the rain kiss you.*

*Let the rain beat upon your head with silver  
liquid drops.*

*Let the rain sing you a lullaby.*

*The rain makes still pools on the sidewalk.*

*The rain makes running pools in the gutter.*

*The rain plays a little sleep-song on our roof at  
night.*

*And I love the rain.*

So, in contrast, Ivy Eastwick's "Where's Mary?" (p. 217) is an altogether comic study in irritability, a nagging woman getting more and more shrewish with every line. You find

yourself growing sharper with every word.  
Heaven help poor Mary!

For an example of two entirely different poems about the same general subject, look at "Something Told the Wild Geese" by Rachel Field, and "The Last Word of a Bluebird" by Robert Frost.<sup>1</sup> Both poems are about the migration of birds in the autumn, but their tunes and rhythms are as unlike as possible, and each one induces a completely different mood. "Something Told the Wild Geese" has caught the wild poignancy of the autumn flight of geese southward. The last two lines almost give you the shiver up the backbone that you feel when you hear wild geese honking overhead. Now look at "The Last Word of a Bluebird." It sounds as colloquial as two old men, meeting on a street corner to discuss the late lamented cold snap. Only it happens to be a crow telling a man what happened. It is laconic, earnest, and comic. Two different tunes compel two different moods and do something to your reading if you explore them orally a time or two.

*Melody and movement furnish clues to meaning.* Although these clues are not always apparent, we often use them unconsciously. For example, a boy said to his teacher, "Whenever I hear you read 'The Snare' or whenever I say it myself I always feel as if I were running, sort of pushing on through bushes and things." And his teacher replied, "I think that is what the author, James Stephens, wanted you to feel. That is what the poem is about—the need to hurry." Now read it yourself and feel the push of the words which convey the sense of pressure.<sup>2</sup>

Since you are a grown-up you can see how the author gets this effect through the repetition of a line in each verse, but for the children it is enough that they sense the feeling of hurry, the idea of pressing need. Look at the small, quiet words of Elizabeth Madox Roberts' "Firefly" (p. 143). Words and lines suggest the idea of a small, evanescent creature, the "little bug all lit."

Notice, for contrast, the hammer stroke of the words in T. S. Eliot's

*The world turns and the world changes,  
But one thing does not change.  
In all of my years, one thing does not change.  
However you disguise it, this thing does not  
change:  
The perpetual struggle of Good and Evil.*

This is the sound of the preacher, hammering home a moral truth. Even if you understood no English, you would know that you were being preached at, and that is the idea back of the words. So the beat of words and lines helps meaning and clarifies obscurities.

Reading poems for children aloud will, then, help to train your ear, improve your diction, and improve your taste for poetry. But, for your own sake, do not confine yourself to juvenile selections; explore adult poetry as well. Treat yourself to a book by a modern poet—Archibald MacLeish, or T. S. Eliot, or Robert Frost. Treat yourself to at least one fine anthology of poetry. Mark Van Doren's *Anthology of World Poetry* and Walter de la Mare's *Come Hither* are two treasures to be used by the whole family through the years. Between the covers of one anthology you will find excitement when you feel dull, peace when you are harassed, refreshment when you are weary.

Poetry has the same power of healing that music has. Prove it for yourself. Some night when you find yourself exhausted or disturbed or "all tied in knots," take out your anthology and read aloud, slowly and quietly, the first twenty-four lines of John Keats' long poem, "Endymion":

*A thing of beauty is a joy forever:  
Its loveliness increases; it will never  
Pass into nothingness; but still will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet  
breathing.*

*Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,*

<sup>1</sup>Both poems are found in *Time for Poetry*, p. 177.

<sup>2</sup>Found in *Time for Poetry*, p. 58.

Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways  
 Made for our searching: yes, in spite of all,  
 Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
 From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,  
 Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
 For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
 With the green world they live in; and clear rills  
 That for themselves a cooling covert make  
 'Gainst the hot season; the mid-forest brake,  
 Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:  
 And such too is the grandeur of the dooms  
 We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
 All lovely tales that we have heard or read:  
 An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
 Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Visualize these lines as you read; then, start memorizing the selection as a whole, that is, going through all the lines each time. You won't learn it perfectly the first night, perhaps, but by the time you have mulled over it four or five times, savoring the words, catching new meanings that escaped you at first, you will discover that your tenseness is gone, that you are relaxed, renewed, healed. For those who have cultivated a listening ear, poetry has the same therapeutic quality as music. When you have made this discovery, you will be ready to use poetry with children as it should be used—for their refreshment, for merriment, for stimulation, for quiet reassurance.

### Creating the mood

With children the success of a poem depends in part upon the way you read or say it, and in part upon the mood and the setting in which the poem is introduced. One father used to settle down in the evening with his small boy in his lap. Sometimes there was an open fire, and always the child was undressed, ready for bed, comfortably wrapped in bathrobe and slippers. Then, in a leisurely, rumbling voice, the father would read or say the poems they both enjoyed. Occasionally the boy's thin treble would chime in, making a piccolo-bassoon duet. Invariably, along with requests for Stevenson and Milne, the child would demand, "Now say that about 'cloud-capp'd towers.'" Father would roll out those

sonorous lines in his rich, deep voice, and the boy would listen intently but without comment. Occasionally he would murmur, "Say it again."

The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,  
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve  
 And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,  
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff  
 As dreams are made on; and our little life  
 Is rounded with a sleep.—The Tempest.

Do you suppose that small boy would have listened to or been absorbed by those lines of Shakespeare had his father tried saying them to him on an automobile trip or at the breakfast table? Probably not. Mothers have always known the value of words spoken quietly at the going-to-sleep period, and the stories they have told and the prayers they have taught then are remembered always. So that small boy will probably carry with him as long as he lives "cloud-capp'd towers" happily associated with the warmth and security of his father's arms.

Schools usually have no such period of peace and affection, but perhaps they should create one. Of necessity a schoolroom must be functional; it must be a workshop, a study, a playroom, and a laboratory, all combined. But it is still possible to create a small area that suggests relaxation and enjoyment. In one classroom there was a little spot of ordered beauty—a table placed against a wall on which hung a bright-colored textile. On the table there was sometimes a bowl of flowers, or a vase with bare twigs, or some shining brasses borrowed from home, or a copy of a fine bit of sculpture. The children took turns arranging this table, which was a continual source of interest and pride. In another room, a teacher had one narrow window to the north. This she had turned into a glowing feast for the eyes, with glass shelves on which she and the children arranged colored vases. Some of them were from the ten-cent store, some the children brought from home as temporary loans, but the result was eye-

filling. In still another classroom, there was space for a rug and some easy chairs over in a corner with the piano nearby. Such areas in the midst of our busy classrooms invite the imagination and are ideal settings for both music and literature.

Now for poetry, teachers and children should make themselves as comfortable as possible. Let there be no sitting up straight with hands folded. If there are any rockers or easy chairs, sit in them. If not, be as comfortable as hygienic chairs permit. If the children sit on their feet, loll around, or curl up in strange postures, let them. You can assuage your conscience by giving them some setting-up (or even sitting-up) exercises at another period. Get the children close to you for poetry; relax, and let it be known that this is the time for enjoyment.

### Introducing poetry

In poetry, as in music, some of us will like certain selections better than others. You will want to make this clear to the children, so that they will not feel forced to approve of every poem they hear. Nor do you want them glibly disapproving. Perhaps if you are introducing a new collection of poems to the children, or if you have a new group of children, you might say to them, "Do you know that the first time you hear a poem you can't always tell whether or not you like it? Sometimes you have to hear it several times before you know. That is why I always read new poems twice or even three times. Then we can see which poems we remember, or think about, or would like to hear again." This suggests a desirably positive reaction, rather than the negative one which comes all too easily to children and to grown-ups as well.

### Anticipating difficulties

Even with two hearings some poems still remain obscure to children unless you clear up in advance the baffling words that block their comprehension. Poets have a high regard for words and read no vocabulary studies to inhibit the use of them. They fling words

around with blithe disregard for the audience to whom they are addressed. "Aye, marry, two," says Mother Goose, and talks nonchalantly in terms of "farthings," "sixpence," "tuffet," "grenadier," "dun," "mare," and dozens of other words that never yet crashed the gate of any respectable vocabulary list for the young. Here are a few more unorthodox words chosen at random from some of the poems already quoted: "helm," "vapour," "dale," "fen," "strong-withered," "disdain," "furled," "comely," "civilly," "louring." What are we to do with such words and the consequent obscurity which they may occasion for young readers?

First, there are the unimportant words which are not essential to the meaning. In all the times that children have heard "Is John Smith within?" not one ever seems to have inquired about "Aye, marry, two." Here, obviously, is just an explosive affirmative to the question, "Can he cast a shoe?" Well, of course he can, my goodness, yes,—two of them, all condensed into "Aye, marry, two." There is no use being heavily pedantic about trivia. Any sensible child gets the meaning of that expletive without your going into the ancient and honorable lineage of "marry." On the other hand, no child is anything but bewildered by Elizabeth Coatsworth's "strong-withered horse." If he is to see anything but a "wrinkled" horse in that line, you will have to explain "withered" before you read the poem. Any key word which is obscure should be explained casually in advance.

Sometimes it is better to read a poem first, letting children catch its sound and movement, and then go back to clear up obscurities. Take Winifred Welles' "Dogs and Weather" (p. 146). Decidedly this is a poem to read first and then go back and mull over happily, dog by dog, in some such manner as this:

"The greyhound for grey fog, a wolfhound with 'a tail like a silver feather' for snowy, wintry nights, a golden cocker spaniel to match the red-gold of autumn—these you can understand. She is matching her dogs to the time of year or the weather. But why did she

want a terrier for rain? She speaks of him trotting through the rain with 'fine disdain'—that means he scorned rain; he never noticed it; rain did not bother him the way it bothers a cat. Do you know why? It is because a terrier has wiry hair, like a thistle, and that hair sheds water better than any raincoat you ever saw. That is why the terrier was able "To trot with fine disdain beside me down the soaked, sweet-smelling lane."

Grown-ups must be aware, then, that the unusual words of poetry may be one source of obscurity and discouragement to certain children. They will like poetry better if they are surer of the meanings. They need not know the meaning of every word—some they can deduce from the context; some are too unimportant to bother about. Key words, however, should be cleared up before reading the poem, while other meanings may be developed casually after reading. Indeed, savoring the full flavor of the unusual words in poetry is part of the pleasure it gives. This must be done casually, with genuine enjoyment and no niggling idea of checking up. It can result in an astonishing enrichment of vocabulary and a livelier feeling for words.

### Waiting for children's reactions

When you finish reading a poem, *wait for the children's questions or comments*. Don't ask, "Children, did you like that poem?" because the poor lambs, earnestly trying to please teacher, will all chorus docilely, "Yes!" Or if you don't have the group really with you, this question will invariably bring forth a strong-lunged "No!" that will set you back for a week. Instead of embarrassing children with such interrogations, wait for them to speak or to ask a question or to make an honest if hesitant comment that is really their own. If nothing comes, read on and don't

### Some spontaneous uses of poetry

Teachers and mothers have long known how to use verse to ward off "scenes," to restore peace, to add a spice of humor when things

worry. Do *you* burst into sprightly comments the first time you hear a new symphony? Probably not. You are *still mulling it over*—a little baffled, or too much under its spell to be capable of marshalling your reactions and translating them into words. In short, you are feeling something, but what it is you are not too sure. It is the same way with children listening to a poem for the first time. The words are not always heard or apprehended even with two readings. For this reason, if the children make no comments and never ask to hear a poem again, slip it in a day or two later and perhaps once again. Then, if there is still no response, no request for it, just tuck it away and say to yourself, "This may be good poetry, but if my children don't like it, it is not for them, at least not now."

Children show you whether or not they like a poem in a variety of ways which you soon begin to watch for. Smiles, chuckles, and laughter are recognizable tributes to the kind of humor they enjoy. A certain intentness often testifies to a feeling which they perhaps cannot put into words. Sometimes the children's quick change of mood is an equally unmistakable sign of appreciation. Children who have been getting a bit peevish or apathetic or discouraged may suddenly come to life with some rousing poetry in which they can participate. Or children who have been overstimulated and are keyed too high may quiet down and relax under the sheer magic of poetry. These are tangible testimonials to their enjoyment. Finally, when children begin to bring in poems of their own choosing to read to the group or shyly and quietly put them on the bulletin board, or when a few children begin to write verse spontaneously—these are the ultimate tributes to the winning power of poetry, and to the unobtrusive, happy way in which it has been presented.

grow tense, and to add color and meaning to everyday experiences. A small boy making a beeline for a mud puddle was diverted by a

hasty paraphrasing—"Jack jump over the mud-puddle quick!" and he did. So the baby who is vociferously loath to get out of his bath begins to giggle when Mother tickles his toes and starts, "This little pig went to market." And many a child reluctant to go to bed has suddenly made a great burst of speed when reminded that Wee Willie will soon be running

... through the town,  
Upstairs and downstairs in his nightgown,  
Rapping at the window, crying through the lock,  
"Are the children in their beds, for now it's eight o'clock?"

Mrs. Duff tells about tucking in her sleepy baby with Shakespeare's

We are such stuff as dreams are made on,  
And our little life is rounded with a sleep.

And she adds,

St. Francis was there, presiding over the bath:  
Praised be my Lord for our sister Water,  
Who is very serviceable unto us,  
And humble and precious and clean.

William Blake was there, and A. E. Housman, and many another poet no less loved by a small person who, while she did not understand the words, still felt their sweetness and enjoyed their sound.<sup>1</sup>

In schools the approach to poetry has been a bit more formal. Teachers have often thought they must "wait for the literature

period at 11:40" and, sometimes, alas, there *was* no literature period; so poetry just waited and waited. Yet it seems fairly obvious that the time for a robin poem, as Dora V. Smith suggests, is at the particular and precise moment in spring when the children announce that they have seen their first robin. So don't start your arithmetic or geography on the exact moment for which it is scheduled, but, instead, take time to see how many robin poems (or songs) you and the children know. Of course there are *Mother Goose's* "The North Wind Doth Blow" and the dramatic "Who Killed Cock-Robin?" There are robins in "The Babes in the Woods." There is "Robin, robin redbreast" with music, and Lucy Larcom's "Sir Robin," and, finally, there is Emily Dickinson's "A Bird," which, though unidentified, is indubitably *Robin*. The children will no doubt think of others, and, then, highly pleased with themselves, will proceed to arithmetic with more vim. So it is well to celebrate the first snow, or falling leaves, or new snails in the aquarium, or a day of high wind, or the blooming of the daffodils, or a new baby in John's family, or the sight of airplanes over the playground. You and your children may take a walk to Shakespeare's "Jog on, jog on the footpath way," or the children may swing to Stevenson's "How would you like to go up in a swing?" In short, if you know quantities of poems, they may be used informally to climax any pleasant experience.

## Planned uses of poetry in the schoolroom

### With school subjects

While an unexpected event may be made more significant by saying the right poem at the right time, it is also obvious that there are many predictable uses of poetry for which suitable verses can be collected. We know, for instance, most of the child's nature interests: the change of seasons; the weather;

birds, flowers, and insects; the sun, moon, and stars. For all of these interests we may well collect matching poems and have them ready. So much poetry is devoted to nature subjects that we can find excellent material to correlate with the children's science experiences throughout the year. In social studies it is not so easy. Of course there are many poems about the farm; and a few about boats, trains, airplanes, and busses; but for the fire department, colonial life, and many other "units"

<sup>1</sup>Annus Duff, *Bequest of Wings*, p. 39.

there are no poems worthy of the name. When good poetry is lacking, do not yield to the temptation to introduce any bit of doggerel because it is conveniently titled "The Fireman" or "When George Washington Was a Boy." If there is fine poetry available, use it. If not, don't waste time with the second-rate. Instead, introduce the children to all the splendid informational books now available for almost any subject you can think of. Then for their literature period, use poetry that is a complete contrast. For instance, when you are having a particularly factual unit of work—transportation or post office, for example—that might be the very time to treat the children to a satisfying feast of nonsense verse, or to investigate fairy lore and the delicately imaginative poetry that "correlates" with no facts but is precious in its own right. In short, correlate school subjects with poetry when you can legitimately by using authentic poetry, and when you can't, use poetry for contrast and enjoy the change.

### With festivals

Of course children celebrate festivals with poetry as well as with music and art. Beginning with the first festival of the school year, Halloween, teachers give the children a background of fairy lore and set them to looking for fairy poems and the favorite jack-o'-lantern verses. They may start with Sandburg's "Theme in Yellow," but they progress to the idea of fairies abroad on Halloween and use some of the Fyelman verses, Rachel Field's "The Visitor," and Walter de la Mare's "Little Green Orchard," "Tillie," "Some One," and (for the older children) "The Rides-by-Nights."

For Thanksgiving, develop the real meaning of the word—literally, "giving thanks"—and introduce the children to that great body of Thanksgiving hymns, the Psalms. The smallest children can learn such verses as:

*Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely (147:1).*

*Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day (81:3).*

*Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name.*

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits (103:1-2).*

With the older children, use Psalm 23, 95, 100, 147, 150, or the first five verses of 103. Children and teacher also talk over what they have to be thankful for today, and this discussion almost always culminates in the children's own song of Thanksgiving,<sup>1</sup> composed individually or more often as a group. Over the years, these psalms of the children's own making have been varied and moving and have well deserved a hearing along with David's words of praise. Perhaps you are wondering why hale and hearty children should be interested in the Psalms, or why schools should use Biblical literature. One boy answered that question, speaking unconsciously for many children who find life none too secure or comfortable. His verse choir had been practicing two of the Psalms for a Thanksgiving assembly. Walking from the classroom to the auditorium, this boy confided quietly to his teacher:

"You know, I like to say those Psalms just before I go to sleep."

"I do, too," she replied. "Why do you like them?"

The boy thought a moment and then said slowly, "Well, they make me feel sort of safe."

And that is what the Psalms have been doing for people all these years, making them feel "sort of safe."

Christmas is actually richer in poetry than in stories. Indeed, the offering is so wide and splendid that there is no excuse for wasting time on the multitude of trivialities that afflict us with rhymes about Santa bringing toys for girls and boys. From Clement Moore's "'Twas the night before Christmas" (which is a

<sup>1</sup>Thanks to the example of Miss Nell Curus' methods of developing such a Psalm, Hughes Mearns, "Childhood's Own Literature," *Progressive Education*, Jan., Feb., Mar., 1928.

*Tirra Litra*, Eleanor Farjeon's *Poems for Children*, and *The Little Hill* mean certain qualities, certain moods, certain favorite poems. Not that either the children or the teacher should go in for an analysis of these qualities, but they are gradually discovered through the frequent use of the books, and through the spontaneous comments of the children. So use for your poetry periods both a good anthology and the books by a single author—some days one and some days another.

### Your own collection

The discussion of the three festivals, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas, suggests the value of making your own choice selections of poems. A good anthology and one or two books of favorite authors will probably be on your desk, but even these will not suffice. The only solution is to make your own collection in a form so convenient that you can always lay your hand on the poem you want. Cards four by six are convenient for this purpose. They are large enough to take a poem of several stanzas on one card if you use both sides, and they can be conveniently filed in a shoe box, which the ingenious teacher decorates attractively and keeps on her desk. Poems should be copied accurately and clearly so that you won't stumble over words when you read from your cards. You may file them alphabetically, according to authors, or under subject-matter heads. Many people use both classifications—they file the full text of the poems according to author, and then make a cross-reference index under subjects, copying on these subject cards only the titles and authors. Blake's poem, "The Lamb," for instance, would be copied and filed under Blake, but its title might appear on two different cards in the subject-matter index, perhaps once under animals and once under religious poems. Your subject index will include all those areas of interest that you have discovered both in the children and in your curriculum. Each person's index will be different, although fairies, the four seasons, play, just-for-fun, going places, and several other

standard topics will occur rather universally.

The reward for having your own collection is that on the day when there is a gale of wind that goes swooshing round the building with such a noise that you are bound to be aware of it, you can go over to your decorative shoe box and produce not one, but six, wind poems. "What have the poets said about wind?" you may ask. "What kind of wind do you think this author was feeling? Are any of these like our gale today? Perhaps, then, not everything has been said about the wind that might be. Perhaps one of you can think of something else about the wind."

The children themselves are fascinated with these handmade anthologies. In group after group where they have been used, a child or two has started his own collection, and, whenever the teacher has permitted it, the children have used her file themselves, lovingly and with pride in the teacher's unique possession. Few of us can reach a library and get out six books by six authors on the particular morning when the daffodils have bloomed and we must celebrate with poems on the bulletin board and with poems to be said together. Then you will be thankful for your cards. You will be equally grateful each year when "Indian" appears on your program, or "Westward Expansion," or "The Farm," and you know that tucked away in your anthology you have the very best poems you need, the ones last year's children liked best, and a few new ones to try out.

Finally, since poetry is difficult to read and since its strongest appeal is to the emotions, whether children are going to grow up liking poetry or not depends largely upon how wisely adults have chosen poems, how well they have read poetry aloud, and how all-around-happy an experience they have made of hearing and saying poetry. Children must both hear and say poetry before they have really tasted the richness of great verse. For these reasons, verse choirs, which can provide valuable and exciting poetry experiences, are discussed in the next chapter.



**V**erse choir or choral speaking is an art that is comparatively new in our schools but old in the history of the race. "A speaking choir," according to Marion Robinson and Rozetta Thurston, "is a balanced group of voices speaking poetry and other rhythmic literature together with a unity and beauty born of thinking and feeling as one."<sup>1</sup>

However, a verse choir is more than a group of people speaking poetry in unison. Like a singing choir, a verse choir is made up of several groups of blended voices that may speak together or separately. These small choirs within the large group will not be as exact a blend in range and quality as the soprano, contralto, tenor, and bass sections of a singing choir, but they will be grouped as low and high voices, or in three groups—low, medium, and high voices. These three groups of well-blended voices are as essential to a genuine verse choir as the four sections of singers are to a singing choir.

Unlike the singing choir, in which so much emphasis may be placed on unity and beauty of tone that some words are blurred or even lost in the effort to preserve a pure musical quality, the speaking choir must project every word clearly and expressively. If words are blurred, the choir is a failure, no matter how charming the voices may be. Moreover, children without adequate voices or musical skill for a singing choir may belong to a speaking choir with success and satisfaction. They may not be musicians, but when they speak poetry together they become music makers in a unique and exciting way.

Certainly nothing has ever demonstrated the singing quality of the spoken word more strikingly than the modern verse choir. Au-



Pine Mountain Settlement School, Pine Mountain, Kentucky

diences are hushed as they hear a poem intensified by the united voices of a verse choir. Just as the combined instruments of an orchestra can develop certain melodies with a richness beyond the power of any single instrument, so a blend of many voices can clarify the melody of certain poems and magnify their rhythm. Children practicing in a verse choir are suddenly electrified by their own results, while other children listening to them want to participate.

Anyone who regards verse choirs as just a stunt should work with them. Children forget themselves completely; they discipline themselves, trying for an exact tone or inflection. They will listen to each other critically or with warmest enthusiasm; apparently practice periods are almost as enjoyable

<sup>1</sup>Poetry Arranged for the Speaking Choir, p. 13.

as a performance before an audience. From little second-grade beginners to college students, the work in verse choirs is marked by

the most intense enjoyment. Making group music with words is an exhilarating experience.

## Ancient and modern choric speech

Poetry has been spoken, or perhaps chanted, by groups of people in many different parts of the world. The ancient Greek drama consisted first of odes chanted by a chorus with rhythmic bodily movements. Later a leader was added, who spoke certain lines alone; then there were two leaders, each speaking alone. Even with these solo voices added, the chorus continued to play an important part in the drama, sometimes speaking in unison, sometimes dividing and speaking in antiphonal style—one choir and then the other. But in Greek drama, the words of the chorus were as important as those spoken by the leaders. Choric lines advanced the plot and so had to be delivered with the utmost clarity and dramatic intensity if the audience was to follow the developing action.

There are passages in the Old Testament that read as if they were intended for solo and choral voices. For example,<sup>1</sup> in Psalm 24 it is easy to imagine a procession outside the gates demanding entrance, and chanting joyously,

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

while the keeper of the gate challenges,

Who is this King of glory?

and the chorus replies,

The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

Long, long ago, before speaking choirs had been heard of in our schools, a little New England teacher used to let her children say the Psalm in precisely that way. The children

could never decide which was the more glorious part, the dramatic challenge or the robust and reassuring reply. Perhaps the Hebrew people never spoke the words in this manner, but it sounds as if they might have, and those children were sure of it.

Some of the ballads probably were recited by a leader carrying the narrative while a chorus thumped on the table with their flacons and chanted a lusty response. American Indians, with their rain chants or chants to promote the growth of the crops, may also have followed the pattern of solo speech and choric refrains. But, unlike the Greek chorus, the choruses of the ballads and the Indian chants did not carry the burden of meaningful lines that develop the story. The modern speaking choir seems, then, to owe more of its form to the Greek drama with its leaders and choruses than to any other source.

Speaking poetry in unison is nothing new, but verse choirs, as we know them today, are a comparatively recent development. They came to us chiefly from England, where they were suggested by John Masefield and initiated by Miss Marjorie Gullan. Her inspiration seems to have stemmed from the Greek drama, because in one of her earlier accounts of her experiment she writes:

The author first had the opportunity of making an experiment in choral speaking on the occasion of the Glasgow Musical Festival of 1922, when she trained a group of speakers in Greek drama choruses for a poetry speaking contest. It was subsequently found by experiment that the old Scottish ballads, with their haunting refrains or their vivid dialogue, gave just the inspiration needed for Scottish choric speakers.<sup>2</sup>

Her first experiments with choral speech were so successful that they were applauded

<sup>1</sup>Robinson and Thurston, *Poetry Arranged for the Speaking Chorus*, p. 95.

<sup>2</sup>Marjorie Gullan, *Choral Speaking*, p. xi.

and encouraged by such English writers as John Masfield, Poet Laureate of England, and Gordon Bottomley, playwright and critic. John Masfield established the Oxford Recitations, where speech choirs could come together to speak poetry, hear each other, and receive the expert criticism and advice of Miss Gullan. Later the London Recitations were established for the same purpose. Miss Gullan trained teachers for this work, and choral speaking swept England and Scotland, resulting in a fresh interest in poetry and in a wholesome improvement in speech.

In this country Miss Gullan herself gave tremendous impetus to the movement by her lectures, classes, books, and, above all, by the sincerity and power of her own unsurpassed interpretations of poetry. To hear Miss Gullan is to hear English poetry in its full vigor and beauty. To watch her direct a choir of children is to see them suddenly animated with new life. They speak better than they ever spoke before; they reflect Miss Gullan's vitality and sincerity, and they respond to her leadership with complete enjoyment and self-forgetfulness. Yet in spite of her personal inspiration, in spite of the detailed reports of her methods in her many books, American

choral speaking differs from the English choirs. The methods are less uniform and results often less finished. However, here and there throughout the country, sound and beautiful work is under way. For instance, in Milwaukee, under the able direction of Professor Agnes Curren Hamm of Mount Mary College and Marquette University, annual assemblies of choral speaking groups meet together to hear each other and to receive constructive criticism and help. Such poetry speaking assemblies have given impetus to the work in England and will do the same in this country if other cities encourage them.

Verse choirs have generated enough enthusiasm in the United States and Canada to deserve praise and much more encouragement than they have been receiving. Teachers report that speaking poetry together makes it live for the children, does wonders for the improvement of their speech and voices, and gives them the keenest pleasure. For these reasons it seems worth while to scrutinize briefly the methods that are bringing good results and to formulate some standards of performance by which teachers can continually test and improve their own results.

## Laying a foundation for choir work

First of all, working with children in the elementary schools is different from working with adults, or even with high-school boys and girls. The objectives of choral speaking in the elementary schools are the enjoyment of poetry and the development of the children, rather than a polished, finished performance. The approach with children must be more informal than with older people, and practice may not come so frequently or be so intensive as it is with young people and adults.

### Kindergarten-primary

The kindergarten and first grade—perhaps the second, too—are merely periods of preparation for choir work, building toward it but

doing none of the intensive drilling that a real choir necessitates. In these early years, saturate the children with poetry; let them say *Mother Goose* and other simple poetry with you, keeping the voices soft and light just as you do in their singing. When you read a poem with a refrain, let the children come in on the chorus and then *mark the time as you do when they sing* to prevent them from dragging. Let the children discover that a poem can be as good a march or walk or skip or run as music. While the group says "Hippity hop to the barber's shop," let one or two children skip it—a high, free skip with arms swinging. They may gallop to "Ride a cock horse" or march to Milne's "Buckingham Palace" or walk lag-

gingly to "A dillar, a dollar" or rock to "Hush-a-bye-baby." In this way they discover varieties of rhythm in poetry and respond appropriately. Even in the kindergarten, you might take such a little conversation piece as "Susan Blue" (page 190) and let half of the children say the first three lines and the other half the concluding three lines. But at this early period you won't drill them for perfect timing or perfect speech.

Hearing a great variety of poems from nonsense verse to lyrics, developing a sense of rhythm, entering into the saying of these verses individually and in a group, never letting poetry drag or turn into singsong but keeping it light, crisp, and clear in sound, the children will have as much of a foundation for choral speaking as you should expect at the five- and six-year-old levels. If the results of your efforts are the children's wholehearted enjoyment of poetry and the feeling that it is fun to speak together, then you are happy on your way.

#### Middle and upper grades

If you are starting this work with older children, begin in much the same casual way. First, there must always be a preliminary saturation with all types of poetry until the children acquire an ear for rhythm and a quick sense of mood. The informal speaking of some of their favorites follows naturally. This is one of the tests of their genuine liking for a poem—they begin to say it with you. With these older children, always mark the time when they speak together and hold them to standards of suitable tempo and of light, pleasant voices. Never, even on the

lustiest chorus, should the children's voices become harsh or loud. Sweet, light voices are, for children, one mark of good choral speaking. Their vocal cords are immature, and volume can strain and injure these cords with a resultant injury to voice quality. Long ago, public school music teachers began to insist upon light singing for young voices. But too often the child was encouraged to *talk* louder, as if a loud speaking voice were a virtue instead of an unmitigated evil. In verse choirs, children naturally tend to become shrill or loud and harsh; so it is important to remember the warning—*keep these young voices light*.

These older children may explore the rhythms of poetry, and they are mature enough to find their own examples of poems that swing, run, walk, hop, gallop, or skip. They may discover, too, the silent beat in poetry that is like the silent beat in a bar of music. Read aloud to them Stevenson's "Windy Nights" (page 136), asking them to tap on their desks with one finger tip or to mark time in any way that is natural and noiseless. They will soon discover the silent beat between certain lines and realize that it must be observed in poetry just as the rest is in music.

*Whenever the moon and the stars are set,  
Whenever the wind is high,\*  
All night long in the dark and wet,  
A man goes riding by.\**

This discovery of the silent beat is important for the correct reading of poetry, and many children are soon able to recognize it independently.

#### Beginnings of choir work with children

**A**t this point when the children are used to poetry, when they have discovered how much like music it is in its variety of rhythms, moods, and melodies, you may tell them something about speaking choirs. Perhaps you will tell them that just as there are choirs for singing together, so there are choirs

for speaking together, called verse choirs or choral speaking.

#### Unison

To begin choir work, try contrasted examples of short verses that cannot be spoiled by speaking them in unison. Whole unison speech

in its finished form is extremely difficult and requires the greatest precision and sensitivity, nevertheless, start with it in its simplest form for several reasons: first, because ever since the children could say the words of *Mother Goose* with you they have been speaking in unison; second, because such choral speech loosens their tongues and increases their speech agility without any conscious drill; finally, because there is a contagion and fun about speaking together that delights the children and gets the choir off to a good start.

If you have seven-, eight-, or nine-year-old children, you might begin with this rousing march from *Mother Goose*:

The grand Old Duke of York  
He had ten thousand men,  
He marched them up a very high hill  
And he marched them down again.  
And when he was up he was up  
And when he was down he was down  
And when he was only half way up  
He was neither up nor down.

Say it to the children first with the spirited marching rhythm the verse demands, and then let them say it with you, keeping the voices light. After they have it on the tips of their tongues, let half of the children say it and, as the last word is spoken, see if the other half can pick up the first line in perfect rhythm and say the verse through. Later, when the children are used to speaking together, it is fun to begin this march softly as if far away, to grow louder as if the marchers were coming nearer, and then, on a second saying, to carry it far away again and fainter and fainter. A child suggested this variation and the group thoroughly enjoyed it.

A gallop that is guaranteed to rouse the most apathetic is Rose Fyleman's "Husky Hi" (p. 121). Say this to the children and let them say it with you. Make the "husky hi" a vigorous staccato from way down in the diaphragm. You may not mention diaphragm to the children, but you do suggest that they get the feel of this gallop into their voices and into the words. Then let half the children take imaginary reins in their hands and

"cluck" to their horses while the other children say the words. Or two or three children might be Keery and gallop to the verse. Don't use more than three, because the noise of their feet will drown out the speakers or force them to get louder and louder. If the gallopers don't get back to their chairs on the last word, just keep on

Galloping by, galloping by,  
Here comes Keery galloping by.

For a contrast to these lively rhythms, try this one from *Mother Goose*:

Blow wind, blow, and go mill, go,  
That the miller may grind his corn;  
That the baker may take it,  
And into bread bake it,  
And bring us a loaf in the morn.

Say this to the children first, giving full value to the long vowel sounds and the sustained tone in the opening lines. Note the interesting contrast between the long, slow beat of the first two lines and the light staccato of the next two. The children can soon say this smoothly, bringing out the contrast that falls so pleasantly on the ear.

If you are beginning this work with children ten, eleven, and twelve years old, you might start with Shakespeare's walking song:

Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,  
And merrily hent the stile-a:  
A merry heart goes all the day,  
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

Of course, say it to the children first. Doesn't it sound like a detachment of Boy Scouts on a hike? *Stile* may have to be explained—steps over a fence—but even though *hent* is not used today, every child can tell from the context that it means climb over, or get over the stile. Use this song much as you did "The Grand Old Duke of York."

With grown-ups, you can use "Jog on" to illustrate an important distinction between a metrical singsonging of verse and the natural rhythmic emphasis that is desirable. If you mark the metrical beat, you will discover that

in the last line it falls on *in*—"Your sad tires in a mile-a." If you read it that way, or let the children do it, you get a droning singsong that is tiresome and meaningless. You should speak it as you would naturally, accenting *sad* and prolonging the emphasis on *tires*—"Your *sad tires*—in a mile-a." Over and over again, you will discover that when the children are singsonging, it is because they strike the metrical beat so hard that they destroy the meaning. Here meaning depends on the contrast between the *merry* heart that goes all day and the *sad* that *tires* in a mile-a.

For a gallop, use "Husky hi" or the unfamiliar "Master I Have." This you can label "traditional," and so avoid the older children's reproach that *Mother Goose* is "baby stuff":

Master I have, and I am his man,  
Gallop a dreary dun;  
Master I have, and I am his man,  
And I'll get a wife as fast as I can;  
With a heighly gaily gamberally,  
Higgledy, piggledy, niggledy, niggledy,  
Gallop a dreary dun.

Say it to the children first, explaining that here is a young man who is delighted to have a job, "a master." He may have to ride a dreary old dun horse, doing errands, but he doesn't care. A master means wages; wages mean a chance to get married. So he pounds along, celebrating his good luck with a song—and a rollicking, hard-riding song it is! Let half the children say it and, as the last word dies away, let the other half pick it up and say it again. Notice if you prolong the *n* sounds in the final words of the lines, you make them sing. This verse is especially good for learning breath control, which you may or may not call to the children's attention. They generally discover they have difficulty when they try to say those last three lines all on one breath. When the children can say "Master I Have" well, you might try Robert Louis Stevenson's "Windy Nights," which is another good gallop but much harder to say.

For a contrast, try the delicate precision of Eleanor Farjeon's "Piccadilly" (p. 122).

Explain that Piccadilly is the name of a famous square in London, where the flower girls sit around the fountain selling their wares. When the children try to say this verse, they soon discover that it is a tongue twister and requires real speech agility to get in all those words crisply and on time. It is fun to say for that very reason.

These are a few examples of the way you may begin your speaking choirs with either younger or older children. Say a poem first so that they are clear about the words, the mood, the tempo, and the meaning. Then let them say it with you, keeping their voices soft and light. When they know the words, they should speak the poem without your voice to help them, although you will still mark the time.

Probably no one should go much further than this with a speaking choir unless she has studied and acquired sure knowledge of the detailed techniques of developing the work. Listening to well-trained verse choirs or to records of choir work is a great help to the amateur. The following pages will suggest the varieties of choir work and the techniques involved in developing them. It is hoped that this discussion will give additional help to students already familiar with choir work and will encourage the uninitiated to acquaint themselves with it.

### Grouping children in choirs

After you have worked with your children for two or three weeks, you will be conscious of certain voices that stand out, very high voices and very low voices. Children's voices do not have the extremes of range found in adults' voices but still they have more range than you would expect. As you work with large numbers of children under twelve years old, you find that they divide into three groups—high, medium, and low voices. Boys will be found in the high choir as well as in the low, and girls in the low choir as well as in the high. Grouping the children is fairly easy. Listen for your one or two extreme voices at each end of the scale and start with

them. You have to be very careful that the children get no sense of being out of line because they have the highest or the lowest voices in the room. To prevent this, you might say, "To have a good verse choir, children, we need high voices, low voices, and medium voices, each in a group or choir. As I have listened to you, I have heard some lovely high voices, some rich low voices, and some fine medium voices, but I can't tell to whom they belong. Now it is time to try out and see which choir you should be in. After we have our three choirs we shall be able to get much better effects when we speak together."

Take any simple poem that the children know, such as "Jack and Jill" or "The friendly cow all red and white" or "How would you like to go up in a swing?" and begin with the two voices you think are the highest. Let them say a verse together; then add a third and fourth voice and try to get a blend in which no single voice stands out. Keep trying until you have eight or ten children in one group. Follow the same procedure for the lowest voices and for the medium voices. Of course, you may find later that some children have to be shifted to another choir. In these trial periods, children often pitch their voices unnaturally, without meaning to, and have to be moved after a practice period or two.

Some people prefer to get the average range of the voice by the piano. To do this you have a child read or say a poem near the piano, where you pick out his tonal range very softly on the keyboard. Children are surprised to discover that their speaking voices, like their singing voices, have a characteristic range, although a more limited one.

Whichever method of matching voices you use, children invariably become interested in

the process, and some of them develop surprisingly keen ears. Have them listen and judge with you. Older children are a great aid in this process and enjoy helping.

Eight to twelve makes a good group in each choir, although you can use more or less if you need to. Sometimes you will get a blend of voices that is so smooth you can scarcely believe it, and sometimes, alas, one voice will be sufficiently atypical to stand out noticeably wherever you put it. When this happens, don't fuss with the child who has the unfortunate voice, but let him practice (softly) and have the fun of choir work with the others. If you give a program, let him do the announcing or distribute programs or do something sufficiently necessary to justify his being temporarily out of the choir. After all, human values are always more important than assembly programs.

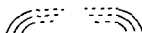
You might occasionally, with a large class, find your choirs falling into four groups, but three is the usual pattern. With three choirs you have a flexible working basis for all the varieties of choral speaking. In a program these three choirs move around or are broken into other units according to the demands of the poems. For instance, you may turn your three choirs—which, for convenience, are referred to as high, low, and medium—into two choirs for antiphonal work. For this, you generally divide your medium voices and let the higher half go with the high voices and the lower half with the low voices. Again, you may wish to keep part of your low voices for a narration and part for a refrain, repeating this pattern in the high voices. Then you would really have five choirs temporarily. Below is a diagram of the three groupings just described.

#### USUAL FORM



Low Medium High

#### ANTIPHONAL



Low Low High High  
Medium Medium

#### GROUPS AND CHORUSES



Low Chorus Low Medium High High Chorus

Experience will probably lead you to form other groups now and then. A solo voice may speak from a group or stand a little apart. There should not be too much moving around, especially in a program with children, but different combinations add to the effectiveness of your choir performance and are interesting to the children. Such changes in your groups you will find necessary if your program includes any variety of poems.

Having three choirs immediately brings color and contrast into choral speaking. Try to divide your voices by the second or, at the latest, the third week of working together. You may do it sooner if you know the children well. Make each choir feel its value to the whole group. High voices take the lines which suggest delicacy and lightness. They

also ask a question, unless the questioner in the selection is a man. The low voices answer the question, unless the answerer is a woman. Low voices read lines which suggest mystery, terror, gloom, or solemnity. They are also used to give richness and warmth, or a reassuring quality to a passage. The medium voices are of great importance to the blending of all voices. They often have a bright, clear quality not so evident in the other two choirs. The medium voices usually carry the narrative, introduce the characters or explanations, and restore the everyday mood. After your three choirs have worked together for a while, you will hear the children in one choir admiring the tone and effect of the other choirs. They are soon able to recognize the particular contribution of each group.

## Problems in casting a poem

Casting a poem is best learned in a class where you can try a poem several different ways before deciding on the most effective method. Casting a poem means deciding how it shall be read—unison, solo and chorus, line-a-child, group work, or antiphonal—and determining how the lines shall be distributed, which choirs shall take which lines. During your early work with a choir you will have to allocate the parts. But the trial-and-error method is good to use with children after they have had considerable experience. Cast a poem one way; then call for suggestions for other possible ways of speaking it, and try some of the children's suggestions. In the beginning they will propose all sorts of impossible divisions, but they will gradually develop a sense of proportion, a good ear for effects, and a feeling for difficulties and limitations.

Page 215 gives two ways of casting Robert Louis Stevenson's "The Wind," using your three choirs in group work. Another plan for casting "The Wind" is to assign each verse to a solo voice and have the chorus done by a blend of voices. But group work on the verses gives more practice to more children

and produces a pleasant effect besides. In this poem the *n* sound in the chorus should be prolonged just enough to give a sense of humming wind. Don't exaggerate this. It should only be suggested. Any overemphasis tends toward a stagy effect, which is the bane of verse choirs.

"The Goblin," from Rose Fyleman's *Picture Rhymes from Foreign Lands*, offers some interesting casting possibilities but falls most often into group-work form, using three choirs (see page 215). There can be a very pretty graduation in tone on those three middle stanzas—"He bumps," "He knocks," "A goblin"—if each chorus comes in just a half tone higher than the preceding one. The last line, with all three choirs speaking it lightly but conclusively, makes a good ending.

In casting a poem, be careful not to break the lines too frequently, especially with young children. Overphrasing gives as choppy an effect with a verse choir as it does with a singing choir. Also, it is not usually advisable to have too sharp a contrast from the very high to the very low. And remember that each of the choirs has its own range from low to high, so that considerable variety can



and should be obtained within any one group.

### Refrains or choruses

You will find that poems with refrains are easy for beginners. From *Mother Goose* we have "A farmer went trotting" (see suggested castings below). In this poem, one group of children may read the narrative, another the "bumpety" chorus, and a third the "lumpety" chorus; or you can keep it within the two groups, one reading the narrative while the other does both choruses. The responsibility of the chorus is always to come in with the same mood as the preceding line. In this first verse all is serene, but in the second verse a mischievous raven cries "croak"—they all tumble down, and various catastrophes result. The chorus therefore becomes proportionately tragic. This is one of the uses of the chorus—to emphasize or anticipate or heighten a mood. The sea chantey, "Blow the Man Down," has two rollicking choruses, and in each one the chorus emphasizes the mood of the preceding lines.

Other easy examples for beginners are to be found in Rose Fyleman's *Picture Rhymes from Foreign Lands*. One of the prettiest is "My Donkey." The moment you read this poem aloud to the children in a mock-serious manner, they

| FIRST CASTING | THE WIND   | SECOND CASTING |
|---------------|--|----------------|
| Low           | I saw you toss the kites on high<br>And blow the birds about the sky;<br>And all around I heard you pass,<br>Like ladies' skirts across the grass— | Medium         |
| Medium        | O wind, a-blowing all day long!<br>O wind, that sings so loud a song!  | Low            |
| High          | I saw the different things you did,<br>But always you yourself you hid.<br>I felt you push, I heard you call,<br>I could not see yourself at all—  | High           |
| Medium        | O wind, a-blowing all day long,<br>O wind, that sings so loud a song!  | Low            |
| Low           | O you that are so strong and cold,<br>O blower, are you young or old?<br>Are you a beast of field and tree,<br>Or just a stronger child than me?   | Medium         |
| Medium        | O wind, a-blowing all day long,<br>O wind, that sings so loud a song!  | Low            |

### THE GOBLIN

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| High   | A goblin lives in our house, in our house,<br>in our house,<br>A goblin lives in our house all the year round. |
| Low    | He bumps<br>And he jumps<br>And he thumps<br>And he stumps.  |
| Medium | He knocks<br>And he rocks<br>And he rattles at the locks.  |
| High   | A goblin lives in our house, in our house,<br>in our house,  |
| All    | A goblin lives in our house all the year round.  |

### FIRST CASTING

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| 1st choir | A farmer went trotting upon his gray mare;     |
| 2nd choir | Bumpety, bumpety, bump!                        |
| 1st choir | With his daughter behind him so rosy and fair; |
| 2nd choir | Lumpety, lumpety, lump!                        |

A raven cried "Croak!" and they all tumbled down,  
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!  
The mare broke her knees, and the farmer his crown,  
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

The mischievous raven flew laughing away,  
Bumpety, bumpety, bump!  
And vowed he would serve them the same the next day,  
Lumpety, lumpety, lump!

### SECOND CASTING

|           |
|-----------|
| 1st choir |
| 2nd choir |
| 1st choir |
| 3rd choir |

catch the idea that the donkey is faking his ailments in order to get attention. The first and third verses can be taken by the low choir, the second verse by the medium choir, and the refrain by the high choir. Be sure to keep the refrain as light and soft as the little syllables themselves: "Lav-lav-lavender." This poem is a good medium for establishing a sweet voice quality and for learning to suggest, by way of the voice, a characterization—in this case, the comical invalidism of the pampered donkey.

A rather complicated but exceedingly effective poem for choirs and choruses is A. A. Milne's "Shoes and Stockings" from *When We Were Very Young*. A decided contrast to this poem is William Blake's "The Lamb," which is best to use with the older children. Remembering that high voices usually ask a question and low voices answer, you will assign the opening and closing couplets of the first verse to the high voices. Lines three through eight can be given to the medium voices, or they can be assigned by couplets as indicated—medium, low, medium. Which casting you use will depend upon the quality

of your medium voices. If that choir is particularly good, with clear voices and good diction, it can carry the whole six lines. Try it both ways in practicing until you know which is better. In the second verse, follow the same pattern, only begin and close with the low voices speaking warmly and reassuringly in answer to the question in the first verse.

After these examples, it should be evident that there are many possible forms for the choral interpretation of a poem. When the group is fairly experienced, it is fun to try out a variety of forms and let the group choose the most effective one. A particularly beautiful solo voice or a choir with an unusually rich quality will often determine the main pattern of the interpretation.

### Dialogue or antiphonal

A happy change from plain unison or unison and refrains is a verse with simple two-part dialogue. "Susan Blue," already mentioned for use in the kindergarten, is an example. In *Mother Goose* there are many simple dialogue poems; for instance, "Little Tommy Tucker's Dog," or the more interesting

#### THE LAMB

|        |    |                                   |        |
|--------|----|-----------------------------------|--------|
| High   | 1  | Little lamb, who made thee?       | High   |
|        | 2  | Dost thou know who made thee?     |        |
| Medium | 3  | Gave thee life, and bid thee feed | Medium |
|        | 4  | By the stream and o'er the mead;  |        |
| Low    | 5  | Gave thee clothing of delight,    |        |
|        | 6  | Softest clothing, woolly, bright; |        |
| Medium | 7  | Gave thee such a tender voice,    |        |
|        | 8  | Making all the vales rejoice?     |        |
| High   | 9  | Little lamb, who made thee?       | High   |
|        | 10 | Dost thou know who made thee?     |        |
| Low    | 11 | Little lamb, I'll tell thee;      | Low    |
|        | 12 | Little lamb, I'll tell thee;      |        |
| Medium | 13 | He is called by thy name,         | Medium |
|        | 14 | For He calls Himself a Lamb.      |        |
| High   | 15 | He is meek, and he is mild;       |        |
|        | 16 | He became a little child.         |        |
| Medium | 17 | I a child and thou a lamb,        |        |
|        | 18 | We are called by His name.        |        |
| Low    | 19 | Little lamb, God bless thee!      | Low    |
|        | 20 | Little lamb, God bless thee!      |        |

1st choir "Is John Smith within?"

2nd choir "Yes, that he is."

1st choir "Can he set a shoe?"

2nd choir "Aye, marry, two."

All "Here a nail and there a nail,  
Tick, tack, too!"

This poem may be spoken as indicated. Of course the second chorus could speak the last three lines, but bringing in all the voices on the last two lines makes a more rounded conclusion. Elizabeth Coatsworth's dialogue between a cat and a bear, "Who are you?" Harold Monro's "Overheard on a Saltmarsh," and Eleanor Farjeon's "Choosing" are great favorites with older children.

A dialogue set in a story is handled differently. A choir carries the narrative and a solo voice the speeches. If "he said" is in a line containing the speech, let the solo voice of the speaker

rather than the narrative choir say it. Otherwise, you get an absurdly choppy reading. "The Raggle, Taggle Gypsies" (p. 89) is a good example of dramatic dialogue. The narrative is carried by a choir; a small choir speaks for the frightened servants, and solo voices take the parts of the lady and her outraged husband. These dialogue poems are popular with children because they are dramatic and effective.

When the children have become used to each other and have lost their self-consciousness, these dialogue poems may occasionally be tried with two solo voices; but, on the whole, the development of all the children is greater when the choirs take the two parts.

Poems which fall into two parts, but are not dialogues, are read antiphonally. Often they are poems of contrast like Elizabeth Coatsworth's "Cold winter is now in the wood," in which the lonely cold of the outdoors (lower voices) is contrasted with the snug comfort of life indoors (higher voices). Antiphonal choirs are effective in suggesting dramatic contrasts.

### Line-a-child or line-a-choir

Another variety of choral speech Miss Gullan has appropriately called "line-a-child." It differs from antiphonal works only in that it engages not two but three or more individual children or choirs. With this little verse of Kate Greenaway's you might use three children, a different child speaking each of the first three lines and all three saying the fourth line together. Or it can be spoken in the same way using three choirs:

- 1st Little wind, blow on the hill-top;  
2nd Little wind, blow down the plain;  
3rd Little wind, blow up the sunshine;  
All Little wind, blow off the rain.

A favorite with English choirs which is equally popular in this country is Queenie Scott-Hopper's "Amy Elizabeth Ermyntude Annie." "Where's Mary?" from *Fairies and Suchlike* by Ivy O. Eastwick is a pleasant poem, too, for this work. Like "Amy Elizabeth," it is prettier line-a-child rather than

line-a-choir. A single voice may speak two lines at a time, or with an expert group only one line.

### WHERE'S MARY?

- 1st Is Mary in the dairy?  
Is Mary on the stair?  
2nd What? Mary's in the garden?  
What is she doing there?  
3rd Has she made the butter yet?  
Has she made the beds?  
4th Has she topped the gooseberries  
And taken off their heads?  
5th Has she the potatoes peeled?  
Has she done the grate?  
6th Are the new green peas all shelled?  
It is getting late!  
7th What? She hasn't done a thing?  
Here's a nice to-do!  
8th Mary has a dozen jobs  
And hasn't finished two.  
9th Well! here IS a nice to-do!  
Well! upon my word!  
All She's sitting on the garden bench  
Listening to a bird!

Line-a-child or line-a-choir is always popular with children because of its variety and because of the challenge of picking up lines quickly in exact tempo. Eleanor Farjeon's "Boys' Names" and "Girls' Names" are good for this type of work. How effectively your children speak these poems will depend largely upon how well you read them in the first place.

### GIRLS' NAMES

- All What lovely names for girls there are!  
Medium There's Stella like the Evening Star,  
High And Sylvia like a rustling tree,  
Low And Lola like a melody,  
Medium And Flora like a flowery morn,  
High And Sheila like a field of corn,  
Low And Melusina like the moan  
Of water.  
All And there's Joan, like Joan.

All three choirs say the first line together. It is spoken with slow tempo and sustained tone which are maintained throughout the poem until the concluding line, which makes a gay, humorous climax. *Stella* should

be given to a medium voice. There is serenity in that line. *Sylvia* goes to a high voice, a little breathy. *Lola* is low and rich; *Flora*, gentle, soft, and medium in tone. *Sheila* is high and light—sun on the corn—with those sharp long-*e* sounds. Finally, the low or lowest voice takes *Melusina* (Mel-û-seen'-a) on a minor note. This intensifies the sudden, humorous contrast of "Joan, like Joan"—spoken gaily by everyone. *Joan* is one syllable, pronounced *Jōn*. The companion poem, "Boys' Names," follows the same pattern. These are beautiful demonstrations of the different tone colors of your three choirs.

An exciting example of line-a-choir for older choristers is Sir Walter Scott's "Hie Away" (see the two castings given at the bottom of this page).

You may let all the voices say the opening and closing couplets, or you may divide your voices—letting the high choir and the high half of the medium group do the first line, while the low half of the medium choir and the low voices take the concluding couplet. Lines three through ten you may assign in couplets or by single lines according to the agility and precision of your choirs. The couplet assignment is a little easier, but the single line break gives more color and variety.

### Solo voices with choirs

In some poems, it is highly effective to have certain lines spoken by a solo voice. In Vachel Lindsay's "The Potatoes' Dance" (p. 122),

for instance, different choruses carry the absurd narrative until they come to the third verse:

There was just one sweet potato.  
He was golden brown and slim.

Having a low-pitched solo voice speak those lines with portentous solemnity heightens and prepares for the mock-tragedy that follows. Another appropriate use of a single voice is in asking the question that opens Eugene Field's "Song" (p. 204):

Why do bells for Christmas ring?  
Why do little children sing?

Then the various choirs follow, answering the questions. In some of the Psalms, several solo voices may be used effectively. Because the contrast of the single voice against the choral groups is so striking, it should be sparingly employed, and only when there seems to be a real reason for it.

### Group work

Most poems are cast into some form of group work, which may involve three, four, or five choirs, combinations of line-a-child, or dialogue. It is not a separate technique or form of choral speaking but merely the use of any or all types of this work for the most effective casting of a poem.

Group work may begin with extremely simple poems and progress to subtle and intricate material requiring real skill in interpretation. An easy example to begin with is Rose Fyleman's "Mice." The opening and concluding couplets of this poem may be spoken either by a solo voice or by all three choirs. A single voice can set the quiet, meditative mood of the poem a little easier than a lot of voices. Lines three through fourteen can be taken in twos by low, high, medium, high, medium, and low choirs respectively. This sixteen-line poem is fun to use because it has good contrast.

### HIE AWAY

|           |    |                                       |        |
|-----------|----|---------------------------------------|--------|
| High Med. | 1  | Hie away, hie away!                   | All    |
| Med. Low  | 2  | O'er bank and o'er brac,              |        |
| High      | 3  | Where the copsewood is the greenest,  | High   |
| Medium    | 4  | Where the fountains glisten sheenest, |        |
| Low       | 5  | Where the lady fern grows strongest,  | Medium |
| Medium    | 6  | Where the morning dew lies longest,   |        |
| High      | 7  | Where the blackcock sweetest sips it, | High   |
| Medium    | 8  | Where the fairy latest trips it:      |        |
| Low       | 9  | Hie to haunts tight seldom seen,      | Low    |
| Low       | 10 | Lovely, lonesome, cool, and green;    |        |
| High Med. | 11 | O'er bank and o'er brac,              | All    |
| Med. Low  | 12 | Hie away, hie away!                   |        |

Another easy but somewhat more subtle example of group work is described for "The Goblin" on page 215. In that poem there is a steadily ascending tone in the middle portion of the poem, a pattern also used in Mrs. Baruch's "Merry-Go-Round" (p. 157) where after the ascent there is an amusing contrast in the slowing down to the end.

For the older children, probably not under ten, Herbert Asquith's "Skating" can be used for more difficult group work. You may cast it in several ways, but the following plan is one possibility:

### SKATING

- |        |    |                             |
|--------|----|-----------------------------|
| All    | 1  | When I try to skate,        |
|        | 2  | My feet are so wary         |
|        | 3  | They grit and they grate:   |
| High   | 4  | And then I watch Mary       |
|        | 5  | Easily gliding,             |
|        | 6  | Like an ice-fairy;          |
| Medium | 7  | Skimming and curving,       |
|        | 8  | Out and in,                 |
|        | 9  | With a turn of her head,    |
|        | 10 | And a lift of her chin,     |
|        | 11 | And a gleam of her eye,     |
|        | 12 | And a twirl and a spin;     |
| Low    | 13 | Sailing under               |
|        | 14 | The breathless hush         |
|        | 15 | Of the willows, and back    |
|        | 16 | To the frozen rush;         |
| Medium | 17 | Out to the island           |
|        | 18 | And round the edge,         |
|        | 19 | Skirting the rim            |
|        | 20 | Of the crackling sedge,     |
| Low    | 21 | Suerving close              |
|        | 22 | To the poplar root,         |
|        | 23 | And round the lake          |
|        | 24 | On a single foot,           |
| High   | 25 | With a three, and an eight, |
|        | 26 | And a loop and a ring;      |
|        | 27 | Where Mary glides,          |
|        | 28 | The lake will sing!         |
| Low    | 29 | Out in the mist             |
|        | 30 | I hear her now              |
|        | 31 | Under the frost             |
|        | 32 | Of the willow-bough         |
|        | 33 | Easily sailing,             |
|        | 34 | Light and fleet,            |
| All    | 35 | With the song of the lake   |
|        | 36 | Beneath her feet.           |

This whole poem must be said with a light swinging rhythm; the tempo must never drag or grow heavy or dull. And notice, in lines seven through eleven, the rhetorical commas which should be completely ignored in reading. The attention to the comma is a continual stumbling block to good reading, and accounts for much singsonging and monotony. Children have often been told to pause or drop their voices slightly at a comma. Occasionally this rule may hold, but in oral reading the rhetorical comma may mean nothing at all. It doesn't in this poem. These lines remain up and unfinished, until the charming "twirl and a spin"—where there is a semicolon, a drop in the voice, and a breathing space. Then the skater is off again. This time, the comma after "willows" (line fifteen) is oratorical as well as rhetorical; so you *do* pause; but, again, in lines twenty-four and twenty-five ignore the comma. See that the ringing *ing* sounds in lines twenty-six and twenty-eight really sing. Finally, on the concluding couplet, with all the choirs coming in lightly and triumphantly, let the voices make a bow with the three concluding words:

*Be-neath-her-feet.*

Does that sound absurd? It really isn't. "Be-neath-her" is gently sustained on a descending scale, or tone, until the voice drops conclusively on that last word. In this way the voice makes a bow—a good way to end many poems.

Since most poems useful for choral speaking are cast for group work, it seems worth while giving a few more contrasted examples. Psalm 103 (the first five verses with the first and second repeated at the close) makes a simple, understandable song of thanksgiving for young children (see page 220, bottom). Don't drop the voice after every phrase, in the usual manner of congregational readings. The voices stay up after each phrase, beginning with verse two, until the conclusive period of verse five. There should be a swell-ing lift to the voices in that last verse.

The parables lend themselves admirably to choral speaking, and they embody great

ideals for children to carry with them all their days. The parable of the Two Houses (Matthew 7:24-27) is easily cast for verse choirs. The Good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-36) is not quite so easy but presents an ideal children need to know. (See below.) The Bible verse form is altered in this copy in order to make it easy to cast for verse choirs. Italic type has been used for some phrases which must stand out—not in loudness but with the gravity of their implications. In

verses thirty and thirty-four keep the voices up after the phrases set off by commas until the period terminates the series. The speech of the Samaritan should go to the voice that speaks it best, regardless of its lowness or highness. That speech is the dramatic heart of this little parable, and the selflessness of the Samaritan must stand out clearly and beautifully. The final question, asked gravely by all the choirs, is a tremendously dramatic conclusion.

### PSALM 103

- Medium 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: and *all* that is within me,  
bless his holy name.
- High 2 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
- Low 3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;
- Medium 4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
- High 5 Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.
- Low and Medium 6 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
- All 7 Bless the Lord, O my soul, and *all* that is within me,  
bless his holy name.

### THE GOOD SAMARITAN

- Medium 30 A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho,  
and fell among thieves,
- High which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him,  
and departed, leaving him half dead.
- Low 31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way:  
and when he saw him, *he passed by on the other side.*
- Medium 32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came  
and looked on him, and passed by on the other side.
- High 33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he  
was; and when he saw him, *he had compassion on him,*
- Medium 34 And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in  
oil and wine,
- Low and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an  
inn, and *took care of him.*
- Medium 35 And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two  
pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him,  
Solo Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more,  
when I come again, I will repay thee.
- All 36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was *neighbor*  
unto him that fell among the thieves?

One last example of group-work casting is for the exotic "African Dance" by a gifted contemporary poet, Langston Hughes. This poem is important for choirs not only because it is a hypnotic study in rhythm but because it offers some difficult problems in timing. The easiest way to solve this timing is to mark the beat exactly as you would if you were drumming. The first two lines count eight in four-four time. The third and fourth lines count the same, which allows four counts for each word. The fifth line allows two counts for each word, with three silent beats at the end (RRR) or, as you would say in music, three rests. The last verse, you will observe, is in broken syncopated time that is easily caught when you hear it read but is almost impossible to describe. The beat is marked beside the poem, using the small mark for unaccented words or syllables, the large mark for accented words or syllables, and the symbol R for silent beats. The difficulty with this description is that the accents suggest a sledge-hammer emphasis and dragging beat which will spoil the poem. Remind the children, the moment they sound heavy, that this is a dance. The second verse is as soft and light as the veiled girl whirling "like a wisp of

smoke." Only with the beating tom-toms in the last five lines does the emphasis become deliberately forceful and increasingly rapid. This is an exciting poem to use with children of twelve or older.

### Unison speech

Only an alert and disciplined choral group is capable of good unison speech. Unison speech, as contrasted with the speaking together of one choir, is the sustained speaking together of all three choirs. It requires a smooth blend of voices, an ability to speak together with perfect timing, and a control of tone and volume. The poems you choose for this form of choral speaking may be as varied as those for any other forms. Begin with a brief poem. Victor Hugo's "Good Night" takes a warm, round tone throughout.

#### GOOD NIGHT

Good night! good night!  
Far flies the light;  
But still God's love  
Shall flame above,  
Making all bright.  
Good night! Good night!

The first "good nights" are not conclusive,

#### AFRICAN DANCE<sup>1</sup>

- Low 1 The low beating of the tom-toms,  
2 The slow beating of the tom-toms,  
3 Low . . . slow  
4 Slow . . . low—  
5 Stirs your blood.  
High 6 Dancel  
7 A night-veiled girl  
8 Whirls softly into a  
9 Circle of light.  
10 Whirls softly . . . slowly,  
11 Like a wisp of smoke around the fire—  
Low 12 And the tom-toms beat,  
(faster)  
13 And the tom-toms beat,  
14 And the low beating of the tom-toms  
All 15 Stirs your blood.

u l r l u u u l r r  
u l r l u u u l r r  
l r r r l r r r  
l r r r l r r r  
l r l r l r r r  
r r r r r r r l  
u l l l  
l l u l u j  
u u u l  
u l r r l u r  
u u l u l u l u  
u u l l l  
  
u u l l l  
u l r u u u l r r  
l r l r l r r r

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *The Dream Keeper* by Langston Hughes, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright 1932 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

but the last one is, and bows the poem out reassuringly. The tempo is even and the mood serene. It is a comforting good-night thought to leave with a child and is well worth his memorizing. College students enjoy this poem just as much as the children do. Eleanor Farjeon's "Mrs. Peck-Pigeon" (p. 140) is pleasant to speak in unison and develops a light staccato—a good contrast to the sustained tone of "Good Night." Unison for long poems should usually be avoided, since prolonged unison is often monotonous.

Unison, refrains, dialogue, line-a-choir, choirs with solo voices, and group work are all different ways of using your choirs in certain poems. Of course you do not develop them in any precise order; that is, you do not develop all poems with refrains one week and all dialogue or line-a-choir the next.

### The choir leader: teacher or student

In the beginning, the teacher must lead the choir. She gives the signals for beginning and ending, she marks the time, and she may signal for crescendo or diminuendo exactly as she would for a singing choir. Some choral-speaking authorities give specific gestures for each signal. This seems a bit pedantic, since no two orchestra leaders use exactly the same movements, nor do any two leaders of choirs. In general, the fewer signals a choir needs, the better trained it is. At first you may wave your hands and arms with large gestures and considerable vehemence<sup>1</sup> until you get your choir loosened up and fired with some enthusiasm. As a choir learns a poem and practices it for greater precision, the leader's movements should become quieter and less

Rather, after the work is well under way, you choose, for each practice, poems that involve different styles of interpretation. Variety in the style of work makes practice more colorful and more fun. After your choir is experienced, you will use unison for some of your most precise and subtle effects.

Ordinarily you do not drill on special sounds, sustained breathing, or pure tone as such, particularly during the early stages of your work. But you will deliberately choose certain poems that give the children the practice you know they need. Nor do you stress speech exercises. In fact it is to be devoutly hoped you will never have to use them because you don't want to make your children self-conscious and you hope above all that they will enjoy their choral speaking and like poetry better because of it.

observable from the audience. A finished performance usually involves only the signal to begin, the signal for the entrance of each choir in turn, and occasionally a gesture to increase or diminish the tone. These signals can be given so inconspicuously that the audience is hardly conscious of them. Older children should have the pleasure and practice of directing also. In every group you will usually find one or two excellent directors. A child can often handle the choir so successfully that you can trust him to take over the leadership for a public performance. This is most desirable. But during practice periods when you are working for good diction, precision, and clear interpretation, you should, of course, do all the directing.

### A public performance

Some directors allow the children to be seated during practice periods, but most teachers find they get better results if the

children stand in good position, even for practice. Choirs may sit while you run through a poem together, clear up meaning, and try out the reading of parts and the whole. But as soon as you cast a poem, get the choirs up and in position for work. Posture is important.

<sup>1</sup>The degree of vehemence depends upon the temperament of the leader. Some work quietly from the beginning.



Children should stand erect with heads up and eyes alert for signals. Encourage the children to let their hands hang loosely and naturally by their sides. If children practice on their feet, they will become so accustomed to the standing position that it will cease to cause them any self-consciousness, and they can actually relax—in the sense of being at ease but never to the point of slumping.

It is certainly not necessary or even desirable to have special costumes for a public performance. Little girls in blue skirts and white blouses and little boys in blue trousers and white shirts, all with red ties, or blue ties, are very sweet and decorative, but the costume is not an important element in a good performance. One choral-speaking group came from a desperately poor neighborhood in the depths of the last depression. These children were clean but downright ragged. They loved their choral speaking, and the poetry they had learned together carried them

out of themselves. Their voices were pure beauty, and their eyes shone; they spoke their poems with understanding and such a sense of enjoyment that they swept the audience along with them. Had they been clad in choir robes of celestial blue, they could not have been more effective or more beautiful. Children who are simple, natural, and intent on doing their best are wonderful to behold, regardless of what they wear. If, however, you wish to use costumes for some state occasion, be sure to have several practice periods in those costumes. Strange clothes can do strange things to easily diverted children; so take no chances. Ordinarily there is no reason for costuming a choir and certainly there is no excuse for ethereal lighting effects or background music. All these accessories smack too much of a stunt, and verse choirs ought to grow out of the children's everyday work. If choral speaking does not have a forthright sincerity about it, nothing is worse.

## Suitable poems for verse choirs

**I**n the voluminous literature on verse choirs, lists of poems are usually included under each type of work, and sometimes minute directions for choir performance of these selections are given. Unfortunately, most of the choral-speaking anthologies range from junior high school to adult level, and those few poems ascribed to the elementary school are not always the type American children enjoy. Try them, by all means, but do not be limited by these lists. Our splendid American anthologies of poetry for children are rich sources of material that you should explore and try out for yourself. But it is only fair to warn you that some of your choices may not work. Teachers ask, "But how can I tell in advance whether or not a poem is good for verse-speaking?" The answer is complicated.

Were you to have a list of all the poems which have been spoken effectively by verse choirs, you still could not be sure that your group would achieve success with these same poems. What goes well with one choir may

not go well with another, even with the same director. Performance abilities differ and tastes differ. However, there are certain characteristics of poems which suggest at once that they are going to be effective or ineffective for choral speaking.

There seems to be a relationship between poetry that is good for choral speaking and music that is suitable for a dance. A dance usually requires music that is markedly rhythmic, and choral speaking needs strongly rhythmic poetry. But there must also be contrast in the music for a dance, or there is no dance; so also contrast is a basic necessity in a poem for choral speaking. When you read a poem through and find a lively rhythm, so far so good. But does the tempo change, or is there variety in mood, or in the persons speaking, or in the ideas presented? It is this change, dramatic variety or contrast, upon which effective choral speaking depends.

Monro's "Overheard on a Saltmarsh," for example, has broad contrasts in the voices

and characteristics of the nymph and the goblin, and subtle and delightful changes of mood within the dialogue of each of the two speakers. Best of all, there are striking contrasts between the pleading and cajoling of the goblin and the sharper and sharper negatives of the nymph. Obviously, this poem lends itself to choir production. "Sleepy-head" (p. 183) provides contrast between the child's matter-of-fact narrative and the lilting, eerie song of the fairies. These are unusually dramatic examples of contrast, but within every poem effective for this type of work there must be some variety.

Not all poems that have contrast lend themselves to choral speaking. Take William Blake's "Introduction" (p. 166), in which you find gaiety and sadness, a dialogue between a phantom child and a human being, and a charming descriptive narrative. Here are all the elements for effective choral speak-

ing. Yet this poem is generally ruined by a choir because it is too subtle, too delicate, and too highly imaginative for group interpretation. The sheer weight of numbers rests too heavily on the light-as-air mood of the verses. The vision, which should be delicately suggested and clearly sustained throughout the poem, is blurred by the inability of a group to hold that vision. On the whole, verse choirs, particularly of children, need poems where broader, less subtle effects can be employed. Choirs add little to some of our finest lyric poetry, and they may even make it seem prosaic and commonplace. Not that it would hurt your choir to try "Introduction," or any other lyric dear to the hearts of you or your children. But the moment you discover that a single voice gives more color, depth, or delicacy to a poem than a choir does, be courageous and abandon that poem as choir material.

## Possible dangers of choral speaking

### Singsong delivery

Choir speaking undoubtedly has its limitations and possible dangers. One danger is the children's tendency to singsong their lines. You work, in the beginning, for a strong rhythmic swing, and invariably the children begin to hit the metrical beat too hard and to drone their verses. The best way to correct this is to turn attention to the story or idea of the poem. Take the second verse of Stevenson's "The Wind" (p. 215). Children almost invariably singsong this verse, and so destroy the meaning. Say to your children something like this: "In that second verse, the boy was talking to the wind. 'It was strange,' he said to the wind, 'that I was able to see all the things you *did*, but always *you yourself*, you—*hid*!' Now can you children speak the boy's words so that people understand just how queer it is that we can *hear* wind and *feel* wind but never *see* the wind?" So you focus attention on meaning, rather than on a certain emphasis. Always

stop your choirs the moment they begin to singsong and try to make them conscious of meaning and aware of what happens when they cease to think the words they are saying. Work continually to help them realize that speaking a poem to an audience means only one chance to make the people understand what it is about. This means that every member of the choir must *think* the words as he says them. Then the audience is bound to catch the meaning.

### Choice of mediocre verse

Another unfortunate tendency of verse choirs is to use second-rate verse because it is "cute" or timely or strongly rhythmic. A poem may have the contrast and the rhythm suitable for choral work, but if it has no merit as poetry, it is a pity to waste time and effort on it. It is true that the finest lyric poetry is too difficult for the average choir, but this does not necessitate lapsing into a choice of mediocre material. Clever nonsense verse is a legitimate starting point. With a little prac-

tice, choirs can soon progress to good narrative poetry, heroic ballads, charming light verse, Bible selections, and a few simple lyrics. Avoid the banal, the newspaper type of verse; in short, avoid poor poetry no matter how rhythmic or timely it may be. Mother's Day sentiment, for example, is not helped by second-rate verse.

### Overdramatics

Perhaps the unhappiest by-product of verse choirs is the lapse into the overdramatics of old-fashioned elocution. Natural, forthright youngsters are sometimes trained to arch their eyebrows on a given line, roll their eyes heavenward, gesticulate wildly and continuously, and oversay and overact every line. Such exhibitions are enough to make any person who respects the integrity of children and the integrity of the spoken word condemn all such work. Of course, small children—four, five, and even six years old—use gestures spontaneously. They can hardly say "Rock-a-bye baby" without rocking their imaginary babies, or "Choo, choo, choo" without shuffling their feet and going into action. But children cease to do this somewhere around seven years old. To put big eight- and nine-year-olds through pantomimic action in the speaking of every poem is to violate not only our code of sincere, thoughtful delivery of lines but good taste as well. An occasional gesture that comes spontaneously to add humor to a nonsense verse may tickle the children as well as the audience. But generally speaking, gestures detract from the meaning of poetry, attract attention to the speakers, and

contribute to an artificial stunt-performance that is bad taste and leaves an audience squirming with embarrassment. Sweet voices, clear diction, quiet, unaffected manners, and a genuine enjoyment of speaking together are the objectives of a verse choir.

### Loud voices, increased speed

Another danger when children speak together is the mounting volume of voices. On such a chorus as "Way-hey, blow the man down," children get enthusiastic and bellow the words if you let them. Or, just in the course of practicing together, you will find there is always a tendency to grow louder and faster. If you let this go on you will soon have a choir with a shrill or harsh, raucous tone that is not only unpleasant but will actually damage the children's voices. Or the tempo will be so fast that words and meaning will be blurred. It is the feeling back of the words, the intensity and precision of the speech, not the volume of voices, that set the mood. In choruses like "Way-hey, blow the man down," work for round, vigorous tone but not loudness. In verses like "Piccadilly," work for precision and for directing voices out over the audience to the farthest persons—a technique which will make every word carry even though the last two lines are almost whispered. Never let the choirs gain momentum until they suggest a runaway. Listen continually to the tone quality of individuals in your choir, as well as that of the entire group. Mark the time firmly, and keep the voices warm, rich, pleasant, and light, but never loud.

## Standards for judging choir work

### Speech and voice improvement

Teachers will be helped in judging the results of their verse choirs if they will ask themselves certain questions. First ask yourself if there has been an improvement in the speech and voice quality of the children. You will probably not practice formal speech

exercises before or during your speaking-choir activities, nor will you do the "lipping" or the breathing exercises recommended by many of the early books on this work. Pure vowels, vigorous consonants, and sustained breath are all essential to good speaking choirs, but they may be gained in the course of poem practice rather than in formal exer-

cises. Choral speaking is very like singing. A song depends for its effectiveness upon clear diction, proper breathing, and good tone quality, but with children these are not practiced as exercises alone. Rather they are achieved through the song. Children can laugh at themselves when they run out of breath on such a chorus as the "Heighly, gaily" of "Master I Have." They understand, then, the necessity for a good deep breath before starting the chorus, and they develop pride in having enough breath left over to "gallop a dreary dun, gallop a dreary dun" for a couple of extra rounds. When they listen to each other—and this is a privilege the children should have every so often—they can detect immediately the one voice using a long *a* sound in "Gallop *a* dreary dun," when the short sound of the *a* is obviously indicated.<sup>1</sup> Or they can hear one voice saying the usual "Christmas," and then understand the reason for pure vowels which everyone in the choir should speak alike.

The problem of local diction is sensibly dealt with by Miss Gullan, who, though Scotch by birth, has worked in London and in all sections of the United States. She advises us to accept the best and the most cultured diction of our own locality as our standard, and not to try to force the speech of one geographic section upon another. This means that we should not expect a Southern child to speak like a New Englander, or vice versa, but in each case should accept the best standards of the community, try to overcome marked local impurities of speech, and work for vigorous, natural diction. Sweet, rich voices are an objective everywhere, and the choir work will help realize this objective, especially if the children have opportunities to listen to each other and to notice voice quality. Even without formal speech and voice exercises, good choral speaking will correct many individual speech faults and will improve children's diction in general. It will not, however, take care of children

who have special disabilities of voice or word-production. Those children need clinical help, or work with a speech teacher.

### Increased enjoyment of poetry

Next, and this might well come first, you should ask, Do the children have a greater enjoyment of poetry because of speaking it together, and are they genuinely eager for more and better poetry? There is something curiously exciting about a good speaking choir. Apparently, the members stimulate each other; the rhythm, the rich body of tone, the dramatic contrasts in choirs and individual voices all help make the experience enlivening and delightful. In schools where choir membership is voluntary, children will skip their lunches if they aren't watched, or will miss special treats for the sake of choir practice. Young choir members read through books of poetry eagerly for new poems that might lend themselves to verse speaking. Children memorize dozens of poems easily with no urging. When such things happen, it is fairly evident that the children are enjoying poetry and that it is becoming a living part of them. Whether or not their taste improves depends largely on the teacher's own good taste and her tact in guiding the children. When they bring in poor, cheap little doggerels because they think they are "cute," be patient; even try the verses rather than hurt the children, but lead them to feel that they can do "harder" things, poems that are more beautiful and difficult. Gradually, the children will bring better poetry to try in practices, and then you can take heart; their taste is developing.

### Growing ability to interpret poetry

Are they also developing growing powers of interpretation, so that they speak their poems with understanding and vitality? At first, the teacher sets the pattern of the interpretation when she reads a poem to the children. With older children, she may read it two or three times, discuss it with them, and then let individual children read it to the group. A fresh voice or a different point of view will

<sup>1</sup>In reading aloud, such words as *a*, *and*, and *the* are usually elided unless the meaning calls for an emphasis, as in "There are many cats, but this is *the* cat."

often bring out new beauties in a poem. Both younger and older children often suggest different ways of casting a poem that are real contributions to interpretation. Every child in the group should be able to read alone unself-consciously and with pleasure. This power comes gradually, but it should come.

### Better personal adjustments

Has the anonymity of choir work helped individual children? This is one of the invaluable by-products of a speaking choir. The shy child forgets himself. Lost in the group, he lifts a timid voice; under the surge and swing of great poetry, he speaks with authority and presently discovers that this new confidence stays with him; he can really do things on his own. On the other hand, the exhibitionist has to learn to submerge himself in the group. This is not so irksome as might be expected, because he presently finds himself carried along by the energizing excitement of the choir. The show-off, along with the other children, develops a pride in group performance—a shared sense of achievement.

### Ability to lead

Are some of the children able to take over the leadership of the choir, showing a real feeling for the possibilities of the work? It is amazing how quickly certain children develop an ear for tone and tempo that makes it possible for them to give sound suggestions which add color and meaning to the interpretation. Others develop, in addition to a keen sense of tempo, an equal sensitivity to the contributions of the three choirs. They can lead certain poems as well as the teacher, and the scope of their directing grows with practice. Needless to say, opportunities for leadership should be provided. Many groups work toward student leadership for public performances. Certainly it is a desirable goal.

### Sincerity

Are the children completely simple, natural, and sincere in their work? Costumes are not needed, nor footlights, nor background music. Can your choir speak for the assembly or

on a school picnic with exactly the same self-forgetfulness and the same intent absorption that possess them in their practice periods? Intelligent, sincere poetry-speaking under any circumstances is an important goal for choral groups.

If your speaking choir seems to be achieving these results, then you are doing sound and careful work. A love of fine poetry, the pleasure of sharing it, vigorous speech, light, agreeable voices, and complete simplicity and honesty of interpretation are the essentials of a good speaking choir.

Among adults, there is no unanimity of feeling about the values of choral speaking. Some adults are enthusiastic. One teacher remarked that after she launched her verse choir the children "simply ate up poetry" which they had scrupulously avoided before. "They memorized yards of poems," she added, "and they want to try everything in their verse choir." A principal likes the work for the same reasons, and adds that in their foreign neighborhood it has done more to get rid of accents and establish correct English diction than all their formal speech drills put together. Another teacher is grateful for the anonymity of the choir, which submerges the show-off and brings out the able but timid child as nothing else does.

Many people dislike the work violently. Perhaps they have heard poor examples—loud, strained voices or exaggerated emphasis. Others feel that altogether too much of the poetry spoken by the choirs is trivial and not worth the effort. Their criticisms may be valid. Choral speaking can be disastrously bad; it may employ poor verse, and, at best, it is no guarantee that good taste or good voice and speech habits will prevail. However, one thing is certain: there are few children who have been in verse choirs under able leadership who do not love the work and turn to poetry habitually and happily ever after. The same is true of college students, who beg for a chance to be in a choir. If choral speaking, when it is well done, can generate enthusiasm both for poetry and for a coöperative enter-

prise, it is certainly worth studying. Look over the catalogue of your nearest university. If it offers classes in choral speaking, treat yourself to such a class, for a genuine treat it will be. Then return to your children and

launch the work with them. Our responsibilities are to know what is good choral speaking, how to achieve it, and what poetry will lend itself to this work and be worth while as literature.

#### FOUR LITTLE FOXES

Speak gently, Spring, and make no sudden sound;

For in my windy valley, yesterday I found  
New-born foxes squirming on the ground—  
Speak gently.

Walk softly, March, forbear the bitter blow;  
Her feet within a trap, her blood upon the snow,

The four little foxes saw their mother go—  
Walk softly.

So lightly, Spring, oh, give them no alarm;  
When I covered them with boughs to shelter them from harm,

The thin blue foxes suckled at my arm—  
Go lightly.

Step softly, March, with your rampant hurricane;

Nuzzling one another, and whimpering with pain,

The new little foxes are shivering in the rain—  
Step softly.

Choirs and solo

High choir

Solo voice

Solo voice

High choir

Low choir

Low solo

Low solo

Medium choir

High choir

Solo voice

Solo voice

High choir

Medium choir

Low solo

Low solo

Medium choir

*Low Saret's touching poem "Four Little Foxes" is an interesting example of a poem which verse choirs may interpret differently. A group of Canadian children loved this poem, cast it for verse choir, and spoke it beautifully. A group of American children decided it was better spoken quietly by a single voice. Here are two different ways in which it may be spoken. When a choir speaks the lines, it must be quietly and with great restraint; otherwise the poem is almost unbearably sad. The final words of each verse should come gently, with the last words almost a whisper but clear, and with, perhaps, a rising inflection on "softly" as if the story were not finished. For children to learn and to speak such a poem is an unforgettable experience.*

#### THE LITTLE FOX

Who came in the quiet night,  
Trotting so lightly?

It was the russet fox who came  
And with his shadow played a game;  
Where the snow lay whitely  
And the moon shone brightly  
There he wrote his name.

Who spoke in the winter night,  
A cold sound and lonesome?

The clock faced owl, so round and hunchy,  
The yellow-eyed owl, in a voice so crunchy:

Who oo-oo-co, are you?  
I like to be only  
Squat and hunchy—  
Do you oo-oo-co, too?"

*This fox poem by Marion Edey and Dorothy Grider is amusing, and is good for eliciting from the children round, full tones and clear diction. For further examples of poems cast into group work form, see the General Edition of Time for Poetry or The Arbuthnot Anthology, which carry in the footnotes and in the introduction "Using Poetry in Verse Choirs" directions for the choral speaking of the Christmas carols and many other poems. The Manuals of the Scott, Foresman Basic Curriculum Readers also include verse choir suggestions, from the pre-primers through the eighth grade readers.*

Once upon a time



Old magic  
Using folk tales with children  
Fables, myths, and epics  
New magic

#### ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS

The Pancake  
Gudbrand on the Hill-side  
Budulinek  
The Master Cat, or Puss in Boots  
Tom Tit Tot  
Tattercoats  
The Frog King  
The Goose-Girl  
Sadko  
Pecos Bill and His Bouncing Bride  
The Hare That Ran Away  
Phaethon  
Daedalus  
Little John and the Tanner of Blyth  
The Emperor's New Clothes  
A Mad Tea-Party  
Pinocchio  
The Open Road



Illustration by Joan Kiddell Monroe  
for *English Fables and Fairy Stories* by James Reeves,  
Oxford, 1954 (book 5½ x 8½)

*Characteristic of this artist's style is her use of space, nervous, flowing lines, and shadowy colors to give body or to point up struggle or danger. Here the castle hangs in space while the coach plunges airily downward, just missing the abyss. A half glimpsed princess completes the air of magic and mystery.*

Folk tales, like the nursery rhymes and ballads, are a part of that great stream of anonymous creation known as "folklore"—the accumulated wisdom and art of simple everyday folk. In the broadest sense of the word, folklore includes superstitions, medicinal practices, games, songs, festivals, dance rituals, old tales, verses, fables, myths, legends, and epics. Folklore is sometimes called the "mirror of a people." It reveals their characteristic efforts to explain and deal with the strange phenomena of nature; to understand and interpret the ways of human beings with each other; and to give expression to deep, universal emotions—joy, grief, fear, jealousy, wonder, triumph.

Of the many varieties of folklore, the folk tale is the most familiar and perhaps the most appealing. Interest in folk tales developed in the eighteenth century, along with the interest in old ballads (you remember Allan Ramsay, Bishop Percy, and Sir Walter



Scott). But it was in the nineteenth century that a romantic interest in the old tales grew so strong that many thousands were collected from all over the globe. Striking

similarities were then noticed among the folk tales found in different parts of the world, and many theories were advanced to explain these similarities.

## How and why the folk tales originated

### Remnants of myth and ritual

One of the earliest explanations for the similarities among folk tales of different peoples was the "Aryan myth" theory. It involved several ideas which have now been thoroughly discredited. For instance, it held that the language-group sometimes called the "Aryans" was a pure racial strain descended from a common stock. We know today that there is no such thing as a pure racial strain. It also proclaimed that the people in this language-group (which included not only Teutonic-Germanic but also Greek, Latin, Slavonic, Celtic, and Sanskrit) constituted a superior race. This also is discredited by later scholars. But most important for this discussion, it asserted that all folk tales came from the nature myths of this single ancestral group. This theory is sometimes known as the theory of "monogenesis" or "single origin." Although the "Aryan myth" theory has been thoroughly refuted, it is interesting today because it has been the spring-board for some other theories of folk-tale origin.

Some students, convinced that the folk tales preserved the remnants of nature myths, continually interpret any traditional story as a nature allegory—whether it is about sleep or forgetfulness, about a hero battling with a dragon, or about a lassie being carried off by a polar bear. "Little Red Riding Hood," for instance, has been interpreted as an allegory of sunset and sunrise. The wolf is supposed to symbolize night, and in many versions he succeeds in devouring the little girl, who in her red cape represents the setting sun. This symbolic interpretation is extended in the Grimm version of the story, in which the hunters cut open the wolf and release "Little

Red-Cap," the sun, from her imprisonment in the wolf, or night. Perrault's version of "The Sleeping Beauty," with its oddly extraneous part about the ogress, was considered another embodiment of this night and day myth. The ogress (night) first wishes to devour Beauty's two children, Dawn and Day, and then Beauty herself (the sun). The Norse "East o' the Sun" with its polar bear and its disappearing Prince was, like the Balder myth, supposed to explain the disappearance of the sun. But as Andrew Lang remarked rather caustically about these theories "One set of scholars will discover the sun and dawn, where another set will see the thundercloud and lightning. The moon is thrown in at pleasure."

Other folklorists, while not interpreting all the old stories as nature allegories, believed that many of these tales preserved remnants of other kinds of religious myth and ritual. For instance, Sir George Webbe Dasent thought that the Norse folk tales contained many of the elements of the Norse myths. He explained that after Christianity came to the Scandinavian countries, the old Norse gods lost their prestige and were gradually changed into the fabulous creatures of the folk tales. Odin became the Wild Huntsman riding through the sky with his grisly crew. And perhaps the nursery tale of "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff" preserves the memory of Thor's battle with the Frost Giants, for the billy-goat was the ancient symbol of Thor, and the huge, stupid trolls could easily be the inglorious descendants of the Frost Giants.

Some scholars believe that the accumulative tales like "The House That Jack Built" and "The Old Woman and Her Pig" have ritualistic origins (p. 62). Other stories too, they think, preserve fragments of spells or



Illustration by Joan Kiddell Monroe  
for *English Fables and Fairy Stories* by James Reeves,  
Oxford, 1954 (book 5½ x 8½)

*Characteristic of this artist's style  
is her use of space, nervous, flowing lines,  
and shadowy colors to give body or  
to point up struggle or danger. Here  
the castle hangs in space while the coach  
plunges airily downward, just missing the abyss.  
A half glimpsed princess completes the air  
of magic and mystery.*

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incantations. In the Grimms' dramatic "The Goose-Girl," the heroine puts a spell on Conrad's hat:

Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,  
Blow Conrad's little hat away . . .

Ancient superstitions and customs surrounding christenings and marriage ceremonies may also be found in the folk tales. So may propitiations of spirits, witches, the devil, or certain powerful animals (like the bear in the Norse tales).

### Polygenesis

Another group of scholars stoutly opposed the "Aryan myth" theory ("monogenesis"), which implied that all the folk tales came from a single prehistoric group. Their theory was one of "polygenesis," or "many origins." They asserted that human beings everywhere in the world are moved by much the same emotions—love and pity, fear and anguish, jealousy and hatred; that every people can observe the results of greed, selfish ambition, or quiet courage and kindness; that they have seen the ways of cruel stepmothers (were there no loving ones in the old days, one wonders); and that they saw the neglected or mousy child come into his own. So Andrew Lang and other believers in polygenesis insisted that similar plots could develop in different parts of the world from similar situations common to all men. Lang used the widely disseminated story of Jason to prove his point. This theory would seem to account for the 345 variants of "Cinderella" found in Egypt, India, all parts of Europe, and even among the North American Indians.

However, modern social anthropologists point out that people are *not* the same the world over. In some cultures, for instance, stepmothers may not be feared at all. The Andaman Islanders are apparently indifferent to whether the children they bring up are their own or other people's—no stepmother problem there! Another objection made to polygenesis is that the same story in all its peculiar details and chains of events could

scarcely have grown up quite independently among entirely different groups isolated from each other. But whether or not there is any validity to the theory of polygenesis, one thing is certain: almost all peoples produce folk tales and there are striking similarities among the tales of different peoples.

### Origins in dreams and unconscious emotions

Psychoanalytic writers have studied those objects and ideas which appear frequently in fairy tales from all over the world and have asserted that they are *symbols of emotional fantasy* which all people experience. Among such supposedly universal feelings are unconscious sexual love for the parent, hatred of paternal or maternal authority, love or jealousy among brothers and sisters. The ideas and objects representing these feelings are supposed to be the same in folk tales the world over and to explain the similarities among these stories. But social anthropologists object to this theory, too. They maintain that unconscious emotions vary among different peoples and so do the symbols which represent them. The unconscious emotions described, they say, may be the characteristic product of modern urban life and not universal among all peoples and times.

Some authorities think that the stories originated in the *wonderful dreams or nightmares* of the storytellers. Stories about a poor girl sent out to find strawberries in the middle of winter (some versions clothe her in a paper dress) might well grow from the bad dreams we have when the night turns cold and we find ourselves with too few blankets. Haven't you dreamed that you were out-of-doors, inadequately clothed, and waked up to find yourself shivering? Did "Snow White" emerge from such a dream? Or consider the story of the poor lassie in "East o' the Sun," who kissed the prince and then found herself out on a lonely road—the prince gone, the castle vanished, the little bell that fulfilled her every wish lost forever, and she in rags once more. Is she the embodiment of our

reluctance to return from our dreams to a workaday world? So the fatal questions, impossible tasks, and endless discomforts in the folk tales may suggest some of the anxieties that haunt us in our sleep now and then. Perhaps the primitive quality of some of our dreams may also explain the shocking elements in some of the tales. These always seem less horrible in the stories than they actually should seem because they are seldom attended by any realistic details but are indeed vague, dreamlike, and evanescent.

Another phase of the psychological interpretation of folk-tale origin is the idea that the people who created them found in fancy the *satisfaction of unconscious frustrations or drives*. These imaginative tales provide *wish fulfillment*. That is, the oppressed peasants who produced some of the tales were "motivated by naive dreams of the success of the despised," and so they told stories about cinder lads and lassies going from wretched hovels to fabulous castles, or about a goose girl marrying the prince. Certain it is that fairy tales do satisfy deep human needs, particularly the needs for security and achievement (pp. 3, 8). In the folk tales, banquets, servants, glittering jewels, and rich clothes are concrete symbols of success. Granting that these tales are primarily for entertainment, there seems to be little doubt that they contain a deeper meaning and an inner significance that the child or adult feels without being conscious of the cause.

### Cement of society

In recent times the science of folklore has merged more and more into the science of social anthropology. To understand the why

and wherefore of folk tales, anthropologists have lived intimately with many peoples, visiting their homes, markets, religious ceremonies, and festal celebrations. Of course they cannot visit the early European folk people who produced the folk tales we are most interested in, but their studies of modern folk societies can cast light on the origin of European folk tales. Their conclusion may be summed up in one sentence: folk tales are the *cement of society*. They not only express but codify and reinforce the way people think, feel, believe, and behave.

Folk tales teach the children and remind their elders of what is proper and moral. They put the stamp of approval upon certain values held by the group, and thus cement it together with a common code of behavior. They teach kindness, modesty, truthfulness, courage in adversity—and they make virtue seem worth while because it is invariably rewarded and evil just as invariably punished. This idea of the folk tales as the carriers of the moral code helps explain the ethical significance and emotional satisfaction they still hold for us today (p. 262).

Some of the explanations for the origins of folk tales are dubious, but many of them are reinforced by enough reasonable evidence to make them seem both plausible and probable. Folklorists now agree that the folk tale is created by most peoples at an early level of civilization. Historically, it may contain elements from past religions, rituals, superstitions, or past events. Psychologically, it serves to satisfy in symbolic form some of man's basic emotional needs. Ethically, it serves as "the cement of society"—reinforcing faith and morality.

### Where folk tales originated

Where did the European folk tales come from? Their ingredients seem to have been "compounded with themes from the Cloister and the Castle, mixed with elements from the Bible and from the heathenness of the Orient, as well as the deep pre-Christian

past." In the thirteenth century there was a major development of this literature of the people, and it was then that many of the European folk tales as we know them today took form. But these tales had many and diverse origins. In this rich potpourri most

scholars distinguish two main ingredients: the Indian and the Celtic.

### Indian

From India came a multitude of talking-beast tales and other stories which retained their entertainment value despite the moral and religious lessons sometimes added to them. During the twelfth century, manuscripts of these stories were transmitted to the West through Arabic and Persian translations. These were carried by merchants and Crusaders and circulated throughout Europe. So we can understand why some scholars have thought that ancient India was the source of all the folk tales. Many of the elements in tales we hear today or read in various racial collections did come from India. But there is no telling the original home of the tales which may have been first written down in India but not necessarily created there. Some have been traced back to ancient Egypt.

### Celtic

From Ireland the European folk tales acquired many of the elements that make children call them "fairy tales"—fairies and

witches, spells and enchantments, romance between the two worlds of fairies and humans. The Irish stories are very old—some say they go back to 400 B.C., but Patrick Kennedy, the Irish Grimm, is content with the general statement that they existed long before the Christian era and were preserved by oral tradition. Their number is staggering. Joseph Jacobs estimated it as around 2000 stories, of which only 250 were in print in his day. Undoubtedly Ireland's isolation helped preserve her tales. Dependence for many centuries upon traveling storytellers kept the tales alive and vital in Ireland long after print had superseded the spoken word in most countries. By the eleventh and twelfth centuries many of them had been recorded in the great vellum manuscript volumes written in Gaelic or old Irish. As they circulated through Europe, they mingled with the Indian stories, the court romances, the religious myths, the epics, and the local droll tales to form the almost endless permutations and combinations that the Grimms and their modern successors have tirelessly collected. These collections in turn have been scattered to every corner of the globe.

## Wide diffusion of the folk tales

Whatever and wherever the origin of the European folk tales, one thing is sure—many of these stories or their motifs (central episodes) have traveled all over the world. Students have found recognizable variants of such tales as "Nicht Nocht Naething" ("Nix Nought Nothing"), "Jason and the Golden Fleece," and "Cinderella" in the manuscripts of ancient India, Egypt, and Greece and on the lips of storytellers in Zulu huts, Indian hogans, and Samoan villages—from the Russian steppes to African jungles and the mountains of South America. The three tasks, the flight, the pursuit, the lost slipper or sandal, and the undoing of a spell are found in innumerable racial groups. How were they carried?

First, of course, they were carried orally

by the migrations of whole peoples. Later they traveled from one country to another with sailors and soldiers, women stolen from their tribes, slaves and captives of war, traders, minstrels and bards, monks and scholars, and young gentlemen on the grand tour. Some storytellers no doubt polished and improved the tales, while others debased them. If the folk tales traveled by land, they were passed on by many peoples, and greatly changed in the process; but if they traveled by sea, they stayed closer to the original. Sometimes one story theme would combine with others, producing either a variant of the original tale or a relatively new one. So ancient storytellers preserved old stories, produced variants of others, and occasionally dreamed up new ones to pass on. This process continues today as

missionaries and Marines, teachers and salesmen tell their own versions of the classic tales to children and grown-ups in distant places.

As we have noted, the literary (or written) sources of the popular tales did not begin to circulate in Europe until around the twelfth century. Then came the Indian and Irish manuscript collections, vivid and lively importations which were no doubt partly responsible for the flowering of folk art in the thirteenth century. Ballads and stories began to bubble up everywhere, often with the same plots or themes.

During the sixteenth century, popular literature in England made a dignified beginning in print with Caxton's fine English translations of Aesop's fables, the King Arthur stories, the Homeric epics. In England, too, the chapbooks picked up fragments of tales from everywhere and kept them alive in garbled but recognizable versions, dearly beloved by

the people. In the late seventeenth century, Charles Perrault, with the blessing of the French court, ushered the fairy tales into print with perhaps a somewhat higher degree of polish than those artless little tales should have had. These mark the beginnings of our written sources of folk literature in Europe. Their more ancient written sources are still the debating ground of scholars. Our major concern is with the tales themselves in the collections we use today.

For however fascinating the theories of how and where folk tales originated and spread, the tales themselves have the real magic. There is a freshness and a spontaneity about folk art that still has power to move us, and this old magic is nowhere more potent than in the traditional stories. Children call them "fairy tales," and adults rather stuffily classify them as folk tales. But fairy tales they are—tales of enchantment and wonder, flowing from all the peoples of the globe.

## Collections and collectors

There are four national groups of folk tales which include the children's favorites: the French, German, Norwegian, and English. These have so colored our thinking and entered into our language that we call them classics. Adults should know these collections well enough to select from them the great tales no child should miss. But they should also be familiar with the collections of similar tales now available from almost every other country from Finland to Peru. Not that all of these can or should be used with children, but any one of them may prove an open sesame to a neighborhood. Adults using the major national groups of tales will be interested in the collectors and their methods of gathering and handling their materials.

### French fairy tales

#### Charles Perrault, 1628-1703

The history of Perrault's unique *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye*, published in 1697 and translated into English in 1729, has already

been discussed (p. 43). This is the appreciative tribute paid to Perrault by his countryman, Paul Hazard, a distinguished member of the French Academy:

Perrault is as fresh as the dawn. We never reach the end of his accomplishments. He is full of mischief, humor and charming dexterity. He never seems to be achieving a tour de force, lifting a weight, looking for applause, but he seems to be having more fun than anyone, relating these prodigious stories entirely for his own pleasure. (*Books, Children and Men*, p. 9.)

Mr. Hazard comments on the tenderness and the terror in "Hop o' My Thumb," the suspense and despair in "Blue Beard," and the sly drollery of "Puss in Boots." He reminds us that Puss "profits by every circumstance—a bath, a stroll, or a call," and, finally, wheeling the ogre into taking the form of a mouse, gobbles him up. "We shall laugh over that the rest of our lives," he concludes.

Perrault's eight stories are in perfect style, which means, of course, that they possess



Illustration from the Gustave Doré Album; *All the French Fairy Tales* by Charles Perrault, Didier, 1946 (book 7½ x 9½)

*Here is the cat of cats as no one else has ever quite portrayed him—gallant, intrepid, and a fine, romantic fellow to boot. Examine Doré's details—for instance, Puss' decorations. Notice the lighting effects in this picture, which serve to pinpoint interest on the great cat.*

has only one piece of bread to crumble and let fall—disaster is near. Everywhere is the perfect logic of the French—no loose ends, no incredible happenings. Magic is there, but used so sparingly and with such reasonable preparation that conviction is never disturbed.

Like most adults, young Perrault could not resist "improving" these traditional tales. Sometimes he dabbled with the plot, as in the moralistic conclusion of "Little Thumb." Sometimes he added contemporary touches—"hairdressers" and "patches." Often he slipped in sly bits of satire, as the offer of the king to make the Marquis of Carabas his son-in-law on the spot once he has seen the vast estate of the Marquis. But on the whole, these tales are related with so masterly a sense of the dramatic that they continue to be the children's favorites.

#### Barbara Leonie Picard

Oddly enough, after Perrault's book there was no major collection of French folk tales until Barbara Leonie Picard's *French Legends, Tales and Fairy Stories* was published in 1955. This contains four hero tales, six courtly tales of the Middle Ages, and thirteen legends or folk tales, with no repetition of Perrault's famous eight.

Although there is more magic in these tales than in Perrault's, they will appeal to older children. The epic tales are full of complexities and battles, the courtly tales are highly romantic, and the folk tales, although they contain some variants of familiar themes, are more mature in style than the stories they resemble. Good readers will enjoy this collection, and the

rather more polish and sophistication than is usual in the folk tales. It does not matter to children whether it was Perrault father or son who collected and rewrote the tales; it is their sprightly style the children have always loved. In place of dull narrative, they are lively with conversations. Cinderella's haughty sisters talk about their own finery; Cinderella has earnest discourse with "her godmother, who was a fairy," about her needs for the ball. There is hardly a child who cannot reproduce these dialogues in the very spirit of the original.

Every necessary detail is logically provided for, or its omission underscored as a pivotal point in the plot. In "The Sleeping Beauty," for instance, the fairy touches everyone with her sleep-inducing wand "and little Mopsey, too, the Princess's little spaniel, which was lying on the bed" so that the Princess will not wake "all alone in the old palace." Or, again, we see how Little Thumb finds the way home from the forest for himself and his brothers and sisters by the white pebbles he has collected and dropped. But the next time, the door is locked and he can get no pebbles; he



storyteller will find fresh and exciting material in such stories as "The Grey Palfrey," "The Mouse-Princess," "The Stones of Plouhinec," and "Ripoptet-Barabas."

#### German folk tales

Jacob Ludwig Carl Grimm, 1785-1863

Wilhelm Carl Grimm, 1786-1859

The Grimm brothers may be said to have started the modern science of folklore. They had a scholarly respect for sources which kept them from tampering with the language or the plots as they wrote down the stories from the dictation of the people.

While Perrault altered his tales to suit the tastes of the times, the conscientious Grimms began with a passionate concern for sources. They were university professors—philologists—and their interest in sagas, ballads, popular tales, and all forms of traditional literature was at first secondary to their interest in the roots and development of the German language. This interest in grammar remained paramount with Jacob, but Wilhelm gradually became more interested in the tales than in any other phase of their work. When they began their collection, it was not with children in mind. They undertook their research as a part of a vast and scholarly study of language origins which was to climax in the German grammar (*Deutsche Grammatik*) and the dictionary (*Deutsches Wörterbuch*). They were not only meticulous about recording the tales exactly as the people told them, writing down every variant separately, but they were so afraid that some publisher might refine the stories that they carefully avoided their publisher friend, Brentano, whose predilection for "touching up" they well knew. The Grimms were determined that the language of the people should get into print exactly as it was, and it did. Their kind of scrupulous accuracy in recording folk literature is the standard by which other collections are now judged. The Grimms established folklore as a field for scholars.

The brothers themselves were as unusual as their work. As children, they must have

known pinching times, with their widowed mother trying to support her brood of six. The two little boys, only one year apart in age, were inseparable. They shared the same bed and table, attended the same school, and grew up with the same interests, both intending to be lawyers like their father. If it had not been for the generosity of an aunt, they might never have reached the university, and the world would have lost two scholars. In the University of Marburg, Jacob fell under the influence of Savigny, a celebrated scholar who was responsible for Jacob's early absorption in the literature of the Middle Ages. Wilhelm, of course, followed his brother's lead. After Wilhelm's marriage, the two were still inseparable. "Uncle Jacob" lived in his brother's house, shared the same study, the same books, and the same contented family life.

Yet the brothers were not alike except in their amiable dispositions. Jacob was perhaps the greater scholar of the two, working with tremendous energy and initiative, completely immersed in his studies. Wilhelm was the artist. He loved music and was much sought after socially, for he was a gifted storyteller and a gay, animated companion. The four years after Wilhelm's death was their longest separation. "Die Bruder Grimm," they signed themselves, and so we think of them—the Grimm brothers, scrupulous scholars, cheerful human beings, happily devoted to their work and to each other.

When the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*<sup>1</sup> appeared in 1812 (the second volume in 1815), it caused no particular stir. Some critics considered the stories boorish; Brentano thought them slovenly; and yet somehow, in spite of the reviews, the stories were received with a growing enthusiasm quite unprecedented. Edition followed edition; translations began, first into Danish, Swedish, and French, then into Dutch, English, Italian, Spanish, Czech,

<sup>1</sup>*Nursery and Household Tales* is the usual translation, but for the German *Märchen* we have no precise translation. *Märchen* is legend, fiction, a cock-and-bull story, romance—in short, a fairy tale.



*Walter Crane brought romantic grace and decorative beauty to his interpretations of old tales, but his illustrations are not popular with children. Although Crane has caught the spirit of the old stories, his pictures lack drama and have many confusing details.*

dren who are turned out to fend for themselves but who find love and security after all their hardships. Here are morons, cheerful and irresponsible, and royal youths and maidens, dispossessed, reduced to misery and humiliation, but keeping their innate kindness and tenderness, and so finding love. Here youth responds to the call of great tasks and accomplishes the impossible. Here a girl looks upon Holiness unmoved and is stricken dumb for her hardness, and Godfather Death stalks his prey and cannot be outwitted. These stories have colored the attitudes of readers toward life, toward human relationships, and toward moral standards. They are both fantasy and reality, and they are supremely entertaining.

#### Norwegian popular tales

Peter Christian Asbjørnsen, 1812-1885

Jørgen E. Moe, 1813-1882

Sir George Webbe Dasent, 1817-1896

When people talk about the Scandinavian folk tales, they usually mean a particular book, *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*, the collection most people have known and loved, in one edition or another, all their lives. These stories probably rank with *Grimm's Fairy Tales* in their continuous popularity, and for similar reasons. They have the ring of complete sincerity and the oral charm of the storyteller's art at its best, for they were gathered from old wives who were still telling them to their children or grandchildren. They were recorded by two scrupulous scholars, Peter Christian Asbjørnsen and Jørgen E. Moe, and turned into matchless English by a British scholar, Sir George Webbe Dasent, who was influenced by no

and Polish—in all, some seventeen different languages.

The plots of these tales appeal to all ages from the seven-year-olds to grown-ups, while the style has the peculiarly spellbinding quality of the great storytellers. The Grimms were fortunate in their sources. Besides the "story-wife," Frau Viehmann, there were Wilhelm Grimm's wife, Dortchen Wild, and her five sisters, who had been raised with these old tales and could tell them with effortless fluency. Other relatives, in-laws, and neighbors contributed to the collection also, but were not equally gifted storytellers. If you check in the Pantheon edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* the index of the tales with Mr. Campbell's list of the people who told them, you will discover that most of your favorites—"Hansel and Gretel," "Mother Holle," "The Goose-Girl," "Rumpelstiltskin," to mention only a few—were related either by Frau Viehmann or the members of the Wild family.

To reread these stories is to find strange refreshment. Here are somber tales of chil-

*The strength and simplicity of the D'Aulaires' style is particularly effective in this interpretation of the massive troll and the powerful third Billy-Goat. (See also page 520.)*

other than Jacob Grimm himself. The names of these three men—Asbjørnsen, Moe, and Dasent—are so inextricably bound up with the tales that they are sometimes listed under Asbjørnsen and Moe, the collectors, and sometimes under Dasent, the translator.

Peter C. Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe were devoted friends from early boyhood, and death separated them by only three years. Although Asbjørnsen was a zoologist and Moe a poet and a theologian, both became interested in gathering the popular tales of their country from the lips of old storytellers who were still relating them as they had received them from the lips of preceding generations. When Asbjørnsen started out on a scientific expedition, he followed his folklore hobby in spare time. Indeed the two activities could be admirably combined. Searching for specimens and studying the terrain of the countryside carried him into the isolated districts where storytelling was still the chief source of indoor entertainment. Moe spent his holidays similarly employed, traveling to remote parts of the country and gathering the legends and stories of the district from living sources. Dasent said of them, "For these Norse Tales one may say that nothing can equal the tenderness and skill with which MM. Asbjørnsen and Moe have collected them."

Sir George Webbe Dasent came of a distinguished colonial family in the West Indies and was educated at Oxford. Upon leaving the university, he accepted a diplomatic post in Stockholm. There he had the great good fortune to meet Jacob Grimm, who urged him to begin a thorough study of the language of the North, especially Icelandic. This Dasent did, and his first publication was an English translation of the *Prose, or Younger Edda*, followed by his *Grammar of the Ice-*



*landic or Old Norse Tongue*, and eventually an *Icelandic-English Dictionary*. In the midst of a remarkably strenuous life of study, translations, journalism, and travel, he became interested in the Norse folk tales and made his masterly translations of *Popular Tales from the Norse* and *Tales from the Fjeld*, the two sources for all subsequent English editions.

Mrs. Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen (p. 279), who taught and was herself one of the great exponents of the storytelling art, used to say that she enjoyed the Dasent translation of these tales as much as she did the originals. Other Norwegians have made similar comments and have remarked about the translator's ability to catch the folk flavor of the language, even to the idioms. Like the Grimm stories, the tales were told by adults to adults, and some changes have to be made in the text when they are told to children. Dasent, in his translations, made no such adaptations but gave the stories exactly as they were in the Asbjørnsen-Moe collections. The Dasent

Illustration by Walter Crane for *Household Stories* by the Brothers Grimm, Macmillan, 1938 (book 5¼ x 7¼)

*Walter Crane brought romantic grace and decorative beauty to his interpretations of old tales, but his illustrations are not popular with children. Although Crane has caught the spirit of the old stories, his pictures lack drama and have many confusing details.*



and Polish—in all, some seventeen different languages.

The plots of these tales appeal to all ages from the seven-year-olds to grown-ups, while the style has the peculiarly spellbinding quality of the great storytellers. The Grimms were fortunate in their sources. Besides the "story-wife," Frau Viehmann, there were Wilhelm Grimm's wife, Dortchen Wild, and her five sisters, who had been raised with these old tales and could tell them with effortless fluency. Other relatives, in-laws, and neighbors contributed to the collection also, but were not equally gifted storytellers. If you check in the Pantheon edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* the index of the tales with Mr. Campbell's list of the people who told them, you will discover that most of your favorites—"Hansel and Gretel," "Mother Holle," "The Goose-Girl," "Rumpelstiltskin," to mention only a few—were related either by Frau Viehmann or the members of the Wild family.

To reread these stories is to find strange refreshment. Here are somber tales of chil-

dren who are turned out to fend for themselves but who find love and security after all their hardships. Here are morons, cheerful and irresponsible, and royal youths and maidens, dispossessed, reduced to misery and humiliation, but keeping their innate kindness and tenderness, and so finding love. Here youth responds to the call of great tasks and accomplishes the impossible. Here a girl looks upon Holiness unmoved and is stricken dumb for her hardness, and Godfather Death stalks his prey and cannot be outwitted. These stories have colored the attitudes of readers toward life, toward human relationships, and toward moral standards. They are both fantasy and reality, and they are supremely entertaining.

#### Norwegian popular tales

Peter Christian Asbjørnsen, 1812-1885

Jørgen E. Moe, 1813-1882

Sir George Webbe Dasent, 1817-1896

When people talk about the Scandinavian folk tales, they usually mean a particular book, *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*, the collection most people have known and loved, in one edition or another, all their lives. These stories probably rank with *Grimm's Fairy Tales* in their continuous popularity, and for similar reasons. They have the ring of complete sincerity and the oral charm of the storyteller's art at its best, for they were gathered from old wives who were still telling them to their children or grandchildren. They were recorded by two scrupulous scholars, Peter Christian Asbjørnsen and Jørgen E. Moe, and turned into matchless English by a British scholar, Sir George Webbe Dasent, who was influenced by no

*The strength and simplicity of the D'Aulaires' style is particularly effective in this interpretation of the massive troll and the powerful third Billy-Goat. (See also page 520.)*

other than Jacob Grimm himself. The names of these three men—Asbjørnsen, Moe, and Dasent—are so inextricably bound up with the tales that they are sometimes listed under Asbjørnsen and Moe, the collectors, and sometimes under Dasent, the translator.

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THE THREE  
LITTLE PIGS

The first little pig, who had a good eye,  
would make a man with a head of snow.  
Phase Mr. Man said the best little pig  
gave me some straw to build me a little  
house.  
He made the first little pig, some straw  
and a little house for a pig.  
The first little pig was more than scared  
in straw house when a wicked wolf came  
in.

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Illustration by Feodor Rojankovsky for  
The Tall Book of Nursery Tales, Harper, 1944  
(original in color, book 4 3/4 x 11 3/4)

*Rojankovsky achieves a humorous and keen characterization whether it is his pop-eyed Miss Muffet or these contrasted members of the pig family. Notice his ability to create a tactile impression of fur or feathers, hair or skin. You can almost feel the smoothness of the pink little pigs and the roughness of the old mother pig.*

plentiful. There are magic objects—fiddles, axes, tablecloths, rams, and sticks. Winds talk and take a hand in the affairs of men now and then. A polar bear (another symbol of the North) and a great dun bull are both men under enchantments, and there are the colossal horse Dapplegrim, a kindly wolf Graylegs, and talking beasts of every variety.

Rhymes are infrequent, but one of the prettiest of them is the spell "Katie Wooden-cloak" casts on the Prince:

Bright before and dark behind,  
Clouds come rolling on the wind;  
That this Prince may never see  
Where my good steed goes with me.

For storytelling, "The Pancake" is probably the finest of all accumulative stories because of its humor and rollicking movement. "The Cock and Hen That Went to Dovrefell" has a witty surprise ending that is far more satisfying than its English equivalent, "Henny-Penny." These tales, like the Grimms', run the whole gamut from sheer nonsense to the romantic and heroic. They are classics, and matchless entertainment which all children should have a chance to hear.

British folk tales  
Joseph Jacobs, 1854-1916

When Joseph Jacobs began compiling the English folk tales, his objective was different from that of the Grimms or of the men who had preceded him in the English field. He intended his collection not for the archives of the folklore society but for the immediate enjoyment of English children. So Jacobs

books are, therefore, English sources for adult students of folklore, but you will find that most of the children's editions have altered them as little as possible.

While the general mood of the Norwegian tales is serious, which is true of most folk tales, there is much more humor, or buoyancy, in the Norse collection than in the German. The people make the best of things with an amusing nonchalance. In "The Princess on the Glass Hill," Boots, or Espen Cinderlad, with the barn almost falling about his ears, reassures himself that if things get no worse he can stand it. Gudbrand's old wife, instead of clouting her husband as the German "Mrs. Vinegar" does, makes cheerful alibis for his bad management. Nothing daunts these people, and nothing quells their firm conviction that they will make out somehow.

There are no fairies in the gauzy-winged tradition, but a great deal of magic. Trolls, hillfolk, giants, hags, and witch-wives are

omitted incidents that were unduly coarse or brutal, adapted the language somewhat, especially dialect, and even deleted or changed an occasional episode. Jacobs also "prosod" some of the ballads and left one, "Childe Rowland," in the sing-and-say, or prose-and-verse style, of the original cante-fable. He admitted cheerfully that his editing was all very horrifying to his folklorist friends, but observed that every one of them, even the Grimms, had made similar modifications. Jacobs was scrupulous in recording these alterations. At the back of his books, in a section for adult readers called "Notes and References," he gives the sources for each tale and its parallels, and then notes precisely what changes he has made. Studying these notes, you soon discover that his adaptations are not too heinous, and reading the stories, you realize that he has indeed attained his goal, which was "to write as a good old nurse will speak when she tells Fairy Tales."

Jacobs obtained a few of his tales from oral storytellers—some from Australia and one from a gypsy are mentioned. But most of his tales he obtained from printed sources. He acknowledged the use of stories collected by his predecessors: notably Patrick Kennedy for the Celtic group, Robert Chambers for Scotland, and James Orchard Halliwell for England. Jacobs also credited "How Jack Sought His Fortune" to the *American Folk-Lore Journal* and added "I have eliminated a malodorous and un-English skunk." It was not until 1943 that a whole collection of the American Jack tales<sup>1</sup> was published, "malodorous and un-English" skunks and all! All

<sup>1</sup>The Jack Tales Told by R. M. Ward and others  
Edited by Richard Chase.

Illustration by Arthur Rackham for "Tattercoats" in  
English Fairy Tales, retold by Flora Annie Steel,  
Macmillan, 1943 (original in color, book 5 x 7½)

Many of Arthur Rackham's books with their  
beautiful pictures and elaborate format have  
become collectors' items. The imaginative details  
and soft colors of his illustrations make them  
appeal particularly to older children.

in all, Joseph Jacobs was a sound enough folklorist. As a matter of fact, he was editor of the British journal *Folk-Lore*. But his greatest contribution is probably in selection and adaptation. Had it not been for his collections, many of these tales might still be gathering dust in antiquarian volumes.

These English tales of Jacobs' are remarkable for three things: the giant-killers, the humor, and the large number suitable for the youngest children. From these collections of Jacobs come the favorites, "The Story of the Three Bears," "The Story of the Three Little Pigs," "Henny-Penny," "Johnny Cake," "The Old Woman and Her Pig," and many others. "Tom Tit Tot," one of the stories which Jacobs rescued from the dusty oblivion of the journal, *Folk-Lore*, is undoubtedly the most hilarious of all the variants of "Rumpelstiltskin" in existence. This story is indeed an admirable example of the way cheerfulness creeps into these British stories. The German tale is grave throughout, even somber. The English tale opens with a bit of low comedy between a mother and her greedy, witless daughter. There is a light touch throughout, and yet the story is every bit as exciting and



satisfying as "Rumpelstiltskin." The superiority of this version lies in the full and consistent characterization of the silly girl, the impishness of "that," and the amusing hints as to the personality of the king.

The tales of giant-killers are another striking feature of the English collections, beginning with the old national hero story "St. George and the Dragon," and continuing through "Tom Hickathrift," "Jack the Giant Killer," and their only feminine rival, the resourceful "Molly Whuppie." These stout heroes who make away with monsters were multiplied and perpetuated by the chapbooks, and their adventures have remained popular with British children ever since.

### Oxford myths and legends

Jacobs remained the chief source of English folk tales until, beginning in 1954, volumes of English, Scottish, and Welsh folk tales were issued in the Oxford Myths and Legends series. James Reeves' *English Fables and Fairy Stories* includes many of the old favorites, but also such delightful additions as "The Ped-

lar's Dream," "The Two Princesses," and "The Fish and the Ring." The style is distinguished, the stories are varied in mood, and they read or tell beautifully.

The *Scottish Folk Tales and Legends* by Barbara Ker Wilson are largely unfamiliar. There are simple nursery tales for small children, broadly comic stories for older children, a few horrific scare tales, and stories of romantic beauty. Through them all runs the Gaelic fairy lore—spells, enchantments, magic, and many sorts of fairy creatures, sometimes kind, often menacing.

*Welsh Legends and Folk Tales* by Gwyn Jones includes some of the hero tales of King Arthur and his knights. There are such romances as "Pwyll and Pryderi," "How Trystan Won Esyllt," and three about the fairy "Woman of Llyn-Y-Fan." The folk tales are full of magic, incantations, and fairy folk.

Beautifully told, handsome in format and illustrations, these three books have greatly expanded the range of British folk tales. Their richness will spellbind young devotees of magic and delight the storytellers.

## Predominant types of folk tales

While children care nothing about the names for the different types of stories found in any fairy-tale collection, no adult can read these tales without being conscious of the varied groups into which they fall: accumulative tales, talking-beast stories, the droll stories, realistic stories, religious tales, and, of course, the tales of magic. Many classifications have been made, but this one seems to bring in most of the types and to emphasize their characteristics.

### Accumulative tales

Very young children enjoy the simplest of all stories, the accumulative tale or repetitional tale. Its charm lies in its minimum plot and maximum rhythm. Its episodes follow each other neatly and logically in a pattern of cadenced repetition. Sometimes, as in "The

Old Woman and Her Pig," the action moves upward in a spiral and then retraces the spiral downward to the conclusion. Sometimes, as in the American-English "Johnny Cake," the Norse "Pancake," and the American "Gingerbread Boy," the action takes the form of a race, and the story comes to an end with the capture of the runaway. Fortunately, the runaway in such stories has forfeited our sympathy by his stupidity ("Henny Penny"), or by his impudence ("The Pancake"), so that his capture becomes merely the downfall of the foolish or the proud.

"The Pancake" is one of the most delightful of these tales. The pancake—having jumped out of the frying pan and escaped from the mother, the father, and the seven hungry children—meets a series of creatures and becomes more insolent with each en-



counter. The following excerpt is typical of the racing-chasing style of these little tales:

"Good day, pancake," said the gander.

"The same to you, Gander Pander," said the pancake.

"Pancake, dear, don't roll so fast; bide a bit and let me eat you up."

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the goodman, and seven squalling children, and Manny Panny, and Henny Penny, and Cocky Locky, and Ducky Lucky, and Goosey Poosey, I may well slip through your feet, Gander Pander," said the pancake, which rolled off as fast as ever.

So when it had rolled a long, long time, it met a pig.

"Good day, pancake," said the pig.

"The same to you, Piggy Wiggy," said the pancake, which, without a word more, began to roll and roll like mad. (Tales from the Fjeld.)

Here, in the last four lines, the storyteller by her ominous tone of voice warns the children that for the pancake the jig is up. Piggy Wiggy is Fate itself.

These stories move imperceptibly from mere chants, such as "The House That Jack Built," to stories with more and more plot. "The Three Little Pigs" and "The Bremen Town-Musicians" are repetitional and sequential, but they have well-rounded plots and merge into a more advanced type of story. So the accumulative tales begin as the most plotless of all story forms and move from mere cadenced repetition toward plots involving real conflict and exciting adventures.

Incidentally, the popularity of these accumulative tales with young children has led to a tiresome number of modern imitators. These have often missed the fun, the element of surprise, and the swift movement of the old stories. Modern examples of the happy use of this pattern are Marjorie Flack's *Ask Mr. Bear* and Wanda Gág's *Millions of Cats*.

### Talking beasts

Perhaps young children love best of all among the old tales the ones in which animals talk. Sometimes the animals talk with human beings as in "Puss in Boots" and "The Three

Little Pigs," but more often with other animals as in "The Cat and the Mouse in Partnership." Oddly enough, these creatures talk every bit as wisely as humans, or as foolishly. Possibly their charm lies in the opportunity they give the reader to identify himself with the cleverest of the three pigs, or the most powerful and efficient member of "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff." Perhaps the credulity of "Henny Penny" or of the two foolish pigs ministers to the reader's or listener's sense of superiority. Certainly children are amused by these old tales for the same reasons that modern adults and children laugh at "Mickey Mouse" and "Donald Duck." The animals in both the old and the modern creations are exaggerated characterizations of human beings, and in that exaggeration lie their humor and fascination. People can't openly ridicule the vanity or the folly of their friends, but they can chuckle without malice when they recognize such qualities in the antics of these ludicrous animals.

These beast tales generally teach a lesson, although their didacticism does not stand out so much as in the fables. The folly of credulity and the rewards of courage, ingenuity, and independence are stressed in the outcome of these tales, but they are never emphasized to the point of being moralistic. The stories themselves are so lively and diverting that they are primarily good entertainment. Perhaps the most successful of all modern descendants of the ancient beast tales are Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny*, and all her other "Tales." These have joined the ranks of the immortals, with "The Three Little Pigs."

### The drolfs or humorous stories

A small body of the folk tales are obviously meant as fun and nonsense. These are the stories about sillies or numskulls, who are, no doubt, the ancestors of the "dimwits" in our modern moron tales. Grimm's "Clever Elsie" is a classic example.

As you remember, Elsie had a wooer who demanded a really clever bride. Her family

sent her down to the cellar to draw some beer, and, there, just over her head, she saw a pick-axe that had been left thrust into the masonry. Immediately she began to weep, thinking to herself,

"If I get Hans, and we have a child, and he grows big, and we send him into the cellar here to draw beer, then the pick-axe will fall on his head and kill him."

She cried so hard and so long that first one member of the household and then another came down cellar, listened to her tale, and began to weep, too. Finally, Hans came and, hearing how things were, decided that Elsie was indeed a thoughtful, clever girl and married her. After the marriage Hans, who had evidently taken his bride's measure at last, gave Elsie a task to do in the field and left her there alone. But Elsie, unable to decide whether to work first or sleep first, finally fell asleep in the field and slept until night. Returning home in a great fright, she asked,

"Hans, is Elsie within?" "Yes," answered Hans, "she is within." Hereupon she was terrified, and said: "Ah, heavens! Then it is not I."

And so she ran out of the village and was never seen again.

The English "Lazy Jack," another type of numskull story, is the ancestor of the American "Epaminondas." These are stories of boys sent to bring something home and told exactly how to carry it. When they are given a different object from the one they were sent for, the results are disastrous. So Epaminondas carries the butter on his head where it melts, cools the puppy dog in the water until it dries, drags the loaf of bread by a string in the dusty road, and steps in the middle of every mince pie! That ending invariably brings squeals of shocked enjoyment from young listeners.

Like the accumulative stories, the drolls or humorous stories vary in the amount of plot they develop. Some have well-rounded plots; for instance, in "The Husband Who Was to

Mind the House" (he does so with disastrous results), and in "Mr. Vinegar" (who trades off his cow as the start of a series of barterings which bring him less and less until he has nothing left but a good cudgeling from his wife). The favorite Norse story, "Taper Tom," has not only all the droll antics to make the princess laugh but real adventure as well. Finally, the Norse "Squire's Bride" is not only a droll story but also a capital bit of adult satire on elderly wooers of young girls.

These drolls are sometimes the only realistic stories in a folk-tale collection. Realistic stories, of course, are those in which all of the episodes, however improbable, are possible. They *could* have happened. The astonishing sillies, the dolts, and the ninnies are painful possibilities. So the reader thinks uneasily, "There, but for the grace of a few extra coils of gray matter, go I." Perhaps this is why the droll tale is not so popular as some others. The portraits are all unpleasant: there are no heroes with whom the reader can comfortably identify himself, and the noodles seem only too familiar. Is the storyteller poking fun at us? We are amused for a while, but our egos are deflated and we turn with relief to other types of stories.

### Realistic stories

For the most part, the peoples who created these old tales seem to have had no great taste for using as story material their own "here and now," the stuff of everyday living. Even when they omit all elements of magic, they still tell a fabulous tale: the monster in "Blue Beard," for example, seems to have had some historic basis, but to young readers he is a kind of cross between an ogre and a giant. His English variant, "Mr. Fox," is even less realistic, although strictly speaking there is nothing in either story that could not have happened. Perhaps the prettiest of all realistic stories in our folk-tale collections is the Norse "Gudbrand on the Hill-side." This is "Mr. Vinegar," with a loving wife instead of a shrew. Gudbrand's old wife knows her man can do no wrong; so, secure in this knowl-

edge, Gudbrand makes a wager with a neighbor that his wife will not blame him no matter what he does. Just as Gudbrand expects, his wife's tender responses to his series of disastrous trades reaches a climax with her heartfelt exclamation:

"Heaven be thanked that I have got you safe back again; you do everything so well that I want neither cock nor goose; neither pigs nor kine."

Then Gudbrand opened the door and said, "Well, what do you say now? Have I won the hundred dollars?" and his neighbour was forced to allow that he had.

Is this realism? Strictly speaking, the story is possible, but it hardly belongs to the modern school of acid realism. On the whole, folk tales pay scant attention to the laws of probability, and stories with even a remote claim to realism are few and far between.

### Religious tales

Folk tales using elements of religious beliefs are rarely found in children's collections but are fairly frequent in the complete editions of almost any racial group. Coming down from the morality plays of the Middle Ages, the devil and St. Peter appear usually in comic rôles. The Czech tales have an especially large number of devil stories, in which the devil is always worsted. The story of the devil who begged to be taken back to Hell in order to escape from a shrew of a wife is a popular plot throughout Europe.

The Virgin is usually introduced respectfully and even tenderly. Grimm has several stories in which Our Lady appears, intervening in human lives, kindly and with pity.

### Fairies and other magic makers

The modern word *fairy* comes from the French word *fée*, a name for a variety of supernatural creatures who inhabited a world known in Old French as *faerie*. Into the word have been read wider meanings, borrowed from the medieval Latin word *fatara*, "to enchant," and the older Latin *fatum*, "fate" or

St. Joseph is also introduced as a figure of compassion and as the administrator of poetic justice. The religious folk tales are generally either broadly comic or didactic and are, on the whole, not well adapted to children.

### Romance

Romance in the folk tales is usually as remote and impersonal as the waves of the sea. Like them, romance is a cause—things happen because of it. But the characters are stereotypes. Aucassin and Nicolette are less interesting than their adventures. Enchantments and impossible tasks separate folk-tale lovers, and magic brings them together, whether they be Beauty and the Beast, the Goose Girl and the King, or the lassie who traveled east o' the sun and west o' the moon to find her love.

### Magic

Tales of magic are at the heart of folk tales. These are the stories which justify the children's name for the whole group—"fairy tales." Fairy godmothers, giants, water nixies, a noble prince turned into a polar bear, the North Wind giving a poor boy magic gifts to make good the loss of his precious meal, three impossible tasks to be performed, a lad searching for the Water of Life—these are some of the motifs and some of the fairy people that give the folk tales a quality so unearthly and so beautiful that they come close to poetry. A large proportion of the folk tales are based upon magic of many kinds—so it is worth while to study these motifs and the fairy folk who flit so mysteriously through the tales.

"destiny." These ideas all enter into our concepts of fairies as supernatural creatures—sometimes little and lovely, sometimes old witch wives, or sometimes wise women like the Fates who have the power to enchant or to cast spells on human beings. To these concepts, the Celtic fairy lore has added rich

details. Indeed, although the word *fairy* may come from the French, our fairy lore is predominantly Celtic.

### The little people

The belief in fairies is astonishingly widespread and persistent among Celtic peoples (particularly in Ireland and Scotland). Even when serious belief is gone, certain superstitions remain. From these countries comes the idea of trooping fairies, ruled over by a fairy queen, dwelling underground in halls of great richness and beauty. These fairy raths (or forts) are the old subterranean earthworks remaining today in Ireland and Scotland, with the gold and glitter of jewels added by the Celtic imagination. From these hiding places, according to tradition, the fairies emerge at night to carry off men, maidens, or children who have caught their fancy. They may put spells on the cattle or on the work of humans they dislike, or they may come to the assistance of those who win their gratitude. To eat fairy food or to fall asleep in a fairy ring (a ring of especially green grass) or under a thorn tree on May Eve or Halloween is to put yourself in the power of the fairies for a year and a day. May Eve (the evening before the first of May) and All Hallows Eve (the night before All Saints' Day) are the two nights when the fairies ride abroad and human beings had best beware. Leave food on the doorstep for them, by all means; keep away from their rings and their raths; and you may avoid their anger and escape their wiles.

The name by which you refer to these 'blithe spirits' is also a matter of importance in Celtic lore. If you want to play safe, you will never use the word *f-a-i-r-y*, which reminds them of the unhappy fact that they have no souls. On the Day of Judgment when humans have a chance (however slight) of going up in glory, the wee folk know full well, poor soulless creatures that they are, that they will simply blow away like a puff of down in a strong wind. So address them tactfully as "the good people," "the little peo-

ple," or "the wee folk," if you would be well treated in return.

Other countries have these little creatures, too. In Cornwall, they are called *pixies* or *piskeys*, and they, like their Irish relatives, ride tiny steeds over the moors. In the Arabian tales you meet the *jinns*, who also live in deserted ruins, often underground, and are respectfully addressed as "the blessed ones." The German dwarfs are usually subterranean in their work and sometimes in their dwelling, too. Although they seem not to insist upon any special form of address, to treat them disrespectfully is to incur sure punishment.

The Norse hill folk live underground also, as do some of the small fairy folk of England and Scotland. There are other resemblances between these three groups. The Norse countries have a house spirit much like the English *Lar* or *Lob-Lie-by-the-Fire*, and like the Scotch *Aikén-drum*. These spirits may take up their abode in a house where they are well treated and make themselves useful in many ways. They sometimes finish household tasks, or make the butter come sooner in the churn, or assure more milk from the cows, or even give advice when their help is sought. They may be propitiated by bowls of milk, or offerings of parsley, chives, and garlic. But woe to the misguided soul who gives them clothes! Such a gift usually offends them and always drives them away, never to return. Oddly enough, the elves in Grimm's "Shoemaker and the Elves" were not insulted by the tiny garments, but they did depart, even though they had manifested a most unorthodox delight in the offering.

### Wise women, witches, and wizards

A few of the fairy folk are consistently evil, but most of them fluctuate in their attitude toward human beings and may be either helpful or ruthless. The wise women, who come to christenings or serve as fairy godmothers to bedeviled cinder lassies, are, on the whole, a grave and serious group. They are not unlike our idea of the Fates, or Norns,

who mark off the life span and foretell coming events. One of these wise women aided Cinderella, while a peevish one sent Beauty off to sleep for a hundred years.

Witches and wizards are usually wicked. They lure children into their huts to eat them, or they cast spells on noble youths and turn them into beasts. Russia has a unique witch, Baba Yaga, who lives in a house that walks around on chicken legs. When she wishes to fly, she soars off in a pestle and sweeps her way along with a besom (two objects which have to be explained to children in advance, by the way). She has some other unique powers that make her quite as fascinating as she is gruesome.

The magicians and sorcerers cast spells but may sometimes be prevailed upon to do a kind deed and help out a worthy youth bent on the impossible. The Celtic "Merlin" is the most romantic of all the sorcerers, but he is seldom mentioned in the folk tales. The English "Childe Rowland," however, enlists Merlin's aid in rescuing Burd Ellen from Elfland.

Occasional imps, like the German "Rumpelstiltskin" and the English "Tom Tit Tot," are hard to classify. They seem to be a kind of hybrid elf and fiend, perhaps just one of the earth-dwellers turned sour, hoping to get hold of a gay, laughing child to cheer his old age.

### Giants and ogres

Ogres and ogresses are always bloodthirsty and cruel. Giants, however, are of two kinds: the children call them "bad" and "good." The "bad giants" are a powerful clan using brute force to mow down all opponents. They swallow their antagonists whole, as tremendous power seems always to do in any age. They are ruthless and unscrupulous and must be dealt with on their own terms—deceit and trickery. But fortunately they are often thick-headed and rely too much on force, so that clever boys like Jack, or the one girl giant-tamer, Molly Whuppie, can outwit them and leave them completely befuddled. The other tribe of giants is the helpful one. They aid the

lad who shares his last crust of bread with them, and of course their aid is magnificent. They can drink up the sea and hold it comfortably until it is convenient to release it again. They can see a fly blinking in the sun five miles away, or hear a blade of grass growing. They feel cold in the midst of fire and suffer from heat in solid ice. They can step lightly from mountain to mountain, break trees like twigs, and shatter rocks with a glance. They are the ancestors of Paul Bunyan and Superman. The lad who lines up these giants on his side is guaranteed to win the princess and half the kingdom into the bargain. But no sluggard, no pompous pretender, no mean soul ever secures this aid. It is freely given only to honest lads about whom shines the grace of goodness.

### Fairy animals

In the world of fairy, domestic animals are as kindly disposed toward human beings as they are in the world of reality. For example, there is that handsome cat of cats, "Puss in Boots"—surely a child given a magic choice of one handy assistant from all the gallery of fairy helpers would choose the witty and redoubtable Puss. The Norse "Dapplegrim" is a horse of parts and does fully as well for his master as the Russian Horse of Power in "The Firebird."

Occasionally wild animals take a hand in the magic events of the folk tales. In the Norse story, a gray wolf carries the king's son to the castle of "The Giant Who Had No Heart in His Body," and, in the Czech story, old Lishka the fox gives "Budulinek" a ride on her tail, to his sorrow. Wild animals may be for or against human beings. Sometimes they serve merely as transportation, but often they are the real brains of an enterprise.

### Magic objects

"Little Freddy with His Fiddle" makes magic music which no one has the power to resist. People cannot stop dancing even though they land in the midst of a thorn bush, even though their bones ache until they

fall down exhausted. Freddy knew how to make magic with that frivolous fiddle of his, and it carried him a long way. In "Herdin the King's Hares," Espen Cinderlad receives a remarkable whistle for his kindness to an old hag. With it he can bring order to every runaway bunny in the king's herd, and finally to the royal family as well:

Then the king and queen thought it best to give him the princess and half the kingdom; it just couldn't be helped.

"That certainly was some whistle," said Espen Cinderlad.

"Molly Whuppie," pursued by the double-faced giant, runs lightly across the Bridge of One Hair, on which the giant dares take not so much as a single step. That is the kind of power every one of us needs to develop—the power to find a bridge, however slight, on which we can run lightly away from the ogres pursuing us. The folk tales are full of these "Fools of the World," who learn how to use magic tools as the pompous and pre-

tentious never learn to do. Espen Cinderlad, with three impossible tasks to perform, hunts around until he finds the self-propelled axe, the spade, and the trickling water that could be stopped or let loose by him alone. Each of these magic objects told him it had been waiting a long, long time, just for him. Magic is always waiting for those who know how to use it.

### Enchanted people

Being put under a spell is just one of the many complications that beset the heroes and heroines of the fairy tales. Childe Rowland's sister unknowingly courted disaster by running around the church "widershins"—counterclockwise—and so put herself under the power of the fairies. "Rapunzel," of the long, long hair, was locked up in a tower by a cruel enchantress who was so clever that only a super-prince could worst her. And there are many variants of the folk tale about the royal brothers who are changed into birds, and who can be released from their enchantment only after their little sister has gone speechless for seven long years and spun each of them a shirt of thistledown. The Russians tell the marvelous story of "Sadko," who lived at the bottom of the ocean in the palace of the Czar of the Sea—this story has all the curious elusiveness of a dream. Grimm's touching "The Frog-King" is one of the many tales in which either the husband or the wife is a fairy creature, or is in the power of some witch or sorcerer. Of these, Grimm's "The Water-Nixie" is perhaps the most exciting and the Norse "East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon" the most beautiful. In all such stories only love, loyalty, and self-sacrifice



The frog treated him to just every one and seemed to make no head start

Illustration by Fritz Kredel for *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, Grosset and Dunlop, 1945 (original in color, book 5 x 8)

Here is a completely realistic interpretation of a fairy tale. The characterization of each figure in the picture, even of the dog, tells something about the story. Children like such pictures because they are understandable and throw new light on the tale. See also page 315.

can break the enchantment and restore the beloved.

There are dozens of other fairy types and fairy characters—gnomes, kelpies, mermaids, sprites, and strange little changelings who replace human children stolen away by the fairies. George M. Richards compiled an amusing *Fairy Dictionary* which provided children with an introduction to these supernatural creatures of many lands. It was a useful book, with its simple definitions and gay pictures, but it has long been out of print.

On the whole, the good and evil supernatural forces in the folk tales act according to certain laws. If magic makes wishes come true and points the way to happiness, it does so only with struggles and hardships on the part of the hero or heroine. The true princess

suffers pitifully before magic opens the king's eyes and he sees her for what she is—the rightful bride for his son and a gentle, loving girl. The youngest son must be courteous to the dwarf and must brave lions before magic shows him how to find the Water of Life. These stories are not didactic, but one after another shows that courage and simple goodness work their own magic in this world, that evil must be conquered even if it carries us to the gates of death, and that grace and strength are bestowed upon those who strive mightily and keep an honest, kindly heart. The magic of these tales is the magic of the "Terrible Meek," who does the best he can with the tools he finds at hand. And it is good magic for children to grow up with, because presently it will be absorbed into their spirits and become a part of their adult strength.

## Folk tales in the United States

The United States is the fortunate recipient of folklore and folk tales from all over the world. Americans should be conscious of and proud of this rich heritage, which they can discover merely by taking the pains to visit one of the intercultural libraries of the large cities, or, better still, by meeting and making friends with different racial groups throughout the country. American Indians have woven beautiful baskets and rugs decorated with characteristic racial symbols, and they still tell their own old tales, some of which are strangely reminiscent of European ones. There are embroideries from Bulgaria and Hungary, with intricate designs that for generations have been passed on from mother to daughter along with legends still more ancient. The Southern mountaineers are still weaving the Tudor rose into their textiles and still singing ballads that were already time-honored in the days of Queen Elizabeth. Boys and girls of Swedish, Russian, Polish, and Scottish ancestry still dance the old dances, sing the old songs, and hear the old stories that have been handed down from their grandparents' grandparents. An Irish

neighborhood abounds with stories straight from the Gaelic, tales that were old when Christianity was young. The Sicilian puppet shows sometimes play the popular stories of the people. A Negro grandmother may be heard telling a story which goes back to the mythology of West Africa. And a Bohemian child may hear her father's version of a story which the Grimm brothers found in Germany over a hundred years ago.

Folklore in the United States falls into four large categories: tales from the American Negro, especially the collections known as the Uncle Remus stories; tales from the North American Indians; variants of the European stories; and native tall tales of the Paul Bunyan variety. In the general discussion of folk tales few references were made to these American types, for definite reasons. In the first place, the European collections came into print long before ours began, and so they rather set the standard or pattern of such tales. Moreover, our collected tales differ in so many respects from those of the European groups that they often prove the exception to the very principles discussed as

typical. They are, besides, far from being a homogeneous group—no generalizations will cover all four varieties. An Uncle Remus tale differs from a tall tale, and a tall tale from an Indian story, quite as much as all of them differ from their European relatives. In short, each of the four types of American folk tales needs to be considered separately.

#### American Negro tales

Joel Chandler Harris, 1848-1908

Joel Chandler Harris became interested in collecting the tales he heard the plantation Negroes telling. Born in Georgia himself and raised on such stories as a child, he knew the Negro's dialect, humor, and picturesque turns of speech. Moreover, he had a deep love both for the stories and for the fine people who told them. In the character of Uncle Remus, a plantation Negro, Harris embodied the gentleness, the philosophy, the shrewd appraisal of character, and the rich imagination of all the Negro storytellers to whom he had listened. Into the mouth of Uncle Remus, he put the stories he gathered first-hand. It was a labor of love performed with sensitive perception and fidelity.

The stories are mostly talking-beast tales, and the hero is Brer Rabbit, the weakest and most harmless of animals, but far from helpless. Through his quick wit, his pranks, and his mischief, he almost always triumphs over the bear, the wolf, the fox, and the lesser animals. Like the French "Reynard the Fox," he is a trickster, but unlike Reynard he is never mean or cruel, only a practical joker now and then, a clever fellow who can out-wit the big brutes and turn a misfortune into a triumph. No matter what happens to him or what he does, he remains completely lovable.

A typical escapade, told by Uncle Remus in his own patois, concerns Brer Rabbit's getting into Brer B'ar's honey and upsetting it all over himself. Brer Rabbit rolled in the dry leaves to get the honey off, but instead the leaves stuck to him until he "wuz de mos' owdashus-lookin' crectur w'at you ever sot eyes on." When he met "ole Sis Cow . . . she

h'ist up 'er tail in de elements, en put out like a pack er dogs wuz atter 'er." He had this satisfying effect on every creature he met, but when he encountered his ancient enemies, Brer Fox and Brer Wolf "fixin' up a plan fer ter nab Brer Rabbit . . . he . . . holler out:— 'I'm de Wull-er-de-Wust. I'm de Wull-er-de-Wust, en youer de man I'm atter' . . . en de way dem crectures lit out fum dar wuz a caution." Later he used this "Wull-er-de-Wust" cry to taunt his foes, much to their embarrassment.

These stories are, of course, reminiscent of the talking-beast tales of other countries. Some of them may have had their roots in India, but it is generally agreed that most of them originated in Africa or were created in this country. Variants of "The Tar-Baby" are found in many lands. But there is a special flavor to the Uncle Remus stories. They show a homely philosophy of life, flashes of poetic imagination, a shrewd appraisal of human nature, a childlike love of mischief and fun, and a pattern and style unsurpassed by any other beast tales.

It must also be added that these stories have their limitations, and the dialect is one of them. Children in the South may be fortunate enough to hear these tales read by adults who can do justice to the flavorsome dialect, but that is what makes the stories almost unintelligible to both children and grown-ups elsewhere. When the stories are turned into standard English they retain their witty folk flavor, just as tales translated from the Norwegian or East Indian or American Indian do. Perhaps translation is the answer here, too.

Other objections to these stories are raised by modern American Negroes. In an article on "Uncle Remus for Today's Children" (*Elementary English*, March 1953), Margaret Taylor Burroughs points out that the tales are full of offensive terms for Negroes. She objects to the intrusion of old "Uncle's" personality and point of view. These sometimes add to the wit and wisdom of the stories, but she cites some deplorable examples also.



These objections point up the fact that if most of the world is to enjoy these rare stories, perhaps translation is essential. And perhaps the great body of seven hundred *Uncle Remus Tales* will survive chiefly as source material. But remember, this is source material of great value. Where else in any collection of folk tales can you find such droll revelations of human nature—antic, sagacious, witty? And where else can you find a colorful dialect so lovingly and perfectly recorded by a scholar with an ear for the euphony of speech?

### North American Indian tales

Occasionally it strikes someone as strange that American children know European folk tales better than they know the tales of the native American Indians. It is actually not strange at all—most of our children are more closely related to Europeans in race, customs, and ways of thinking than they are to our native Indians. Another reason for the less frequent use of Indian stories is that they are, by and large, neither sufficiently dramatic nor well enough organized to command intense interest. Indeed, Alexander Krappe remarks that "the variants of old-world tales collected among the North American Indians give one an impression that their narrators were incapable even of preserving a good tale, to say nothing of inventing a new one." While this may sound like an extreme statement, as a matter of fact it is largely true. Unless the Indian tales are considerably edited and adapted as in the case of the Olcott and Kennedy collections, there are few which are sufficiently memorable to make a deep impression or to be genuinely popular with young people.

Indian stories include many mythlike *why stories*—why the robin has a red breast, why the bear has a short tail, why the woodpecker has a red head. These little explanatory stories are usually simple, brief, and somewhat moralistic. A few of them are interesting to young children; many of them are monotonous. There is a whole cycle of them

concerned with the creation of earth, sun, moon, the stars, and man, but they lack the grandeur and cosmic sweep of other creation myths.

The long, unedited tales of the Indians, recorded verbatim, are long indeed. The tales were sometimes told night after night around campfires, so that the episodes follow one another endlessly. They often lack the conclusive endings dear to young listeners. These unadapted tales are also filled with cruelties and tortures more realistically related, and therefore more horrifying, than the conventional "off with his head" of the European tales. Fortunately, we have some good collections of Indian stories made with children in mind (see Bibliography). These preserve the spirit of the tales and the atmosphere and customs of the Indians, but are sufficiently edited to be entertaining to children. These stories should be used in connection with an Indian unit about some particular tribe, along with realistic stories about that same tribe today.

### Native variants of European tales

Kindergarten teachers who have delighted their children by telling them "Epaminondas" have long known that it was a Negro variant of the English "Lazy Jack" or the German "Clever Hans." They know, too, that it is a much wittier and more satisfying tale than either of the European tales. The Southern "The Gingerbread Boy," printed in *St. Nicholas* in 1875, "Johnny-Cake," in *Jacobs' English Fairy Tales*, and Ruth Sawyer's "Journey Cake, Ho!" are American variants of the Scotch "The Wee Bannock" or the Norse "The Pancake." As was noted before, *Jacobs* included in his English collection the story of "How Jack Sought His Fortune" from the *American Folk-Lore Journal*. There are undoubtedly dozens of other European folk tales extant in this country in characteristically modified form, but so far the most amusing and significant collection of them is *The Jack Tales* by Richard Chase, collected from American mountain people. Mr. Chase's



Illustration by Rockwell Kent for Paul Bunyan by Esther Shephard, Harcourt, Brace, 1924 (book 5¼ x 8¼)

*Notice the clean, powerful lines of Rockwell Kent's pictures, the subordination of details, the resultant clarity and strength of the whole composition. See how the hand grasps the ax handle, how those firmly planted feet support the heroic figure, and how the jutting-jawed face turns the whole picture into broad comedy.*

that many of the tales would be found elsewhere in this country, and they have been.

### Tall Tales and other native inventions

It is no accident that in this vast country, where people think and say "The sky's the limit," the two national symbols are a super-tall, benignant old giant known as "Uncle Sam" and the biggest bird in the country, the eagle. This is a pioneer land which—by our proud notions at least—has the biggest rivers, the tallest mountains, the vastest plains, and the humblest individuals skyrocketing to highest fame and fortune. So its people are bound to think expansively. They naturally express themselves with exaggeration and develop a sense of humor that is untrammelled and exuberant. And naturally the American stories follow the pattern of the biggest, the most heroic, even the most preposterous, from Davy Crockett to Superman.

Our native tall tales—with their outrageous exaggeration, their poker-faced humor, and their swaggering heroes who do the impossible with nonchalance—are the natural expressions of our native optimism and our unshakable belief that our countrymen can do anything and then some. These tales also embody delusions of power: dreams of riding a cyclone or mowing down forests, or, in short, blithely surmounting any and every obstacle. These stories appeal to Americans because they are success epics with a sense of humor. They are such flagrant lies that the lyingest yarn of all is the best one, provided it is told with a straight face and every similitude of truth. Babe, Paul Bunyan's blue ox, measures "forty-two axhandles between the

account of these gay-hearted people makes you wish there were more of them. Old Counce "was a sight to dance....Seventy years old, he could clog and buck-dance as good as a boy sixteen." And he could also spellbind the mountaineer children with tales—tales that should never be read—"You've got to tell 'em to make 'em go right."

The stories are recorded in the vernacular of the mountain people who have modified them to local speech and customs. The god Wotan or Woden appears, ancient, mysterious, but as helpful to Jack as he was to Sigurd or Siegfried. Jack is a country boy, unassuming but resourceful, and never nonplussed by the most fantastic adventures. The language is ungrammatical and sometimes rough, but it is humorously effective when handled by as gifted a storyteller as Richard Chase. The mood is decidedly comic, the setting rural. City children may not know "The Old Sow and the Three Little Shoats," but they'll recognize it as the "Three Little Pigs." The book's appendix by Herbert Halpert predicted

eyes—and a tobacco box—you could easily fit in a Star tobacco box after the last axhandle." Pecos Bill, after riding the cyclone successfully, must figure a convenient way of getting down. In short, one characteristic of American humor is that there must be a great show of reasonableness and accuracy in the midst of the most hilarious lunacy.

There are no complete or satisfying answers to the questions about where all these tales came from or who started them. The New England coast produced Captain Storm-along. Paul Bunyan and his blue ox came from the lumber camps, perhaps of Canada or Wisconsin or Michigan. The Western

plains started Pecos Bill and his horse the Widow Maker on their careers. Mike Fink was a keelboatman on the Mississippi, while Davy Crockett, Tony Beaver, and John Henry all belong to the South. One artist has covered a map of the United States with these heroes,<sup>1</sup> and it is the most astonishing array of rip-roaring, snarling, snorting heroes that any country ever produced. These tall-tale heroes are not only broadly and wildly funny, but they are also these United States in person, "large as life and twice as natural." Certainly no young citizens should miss reading about the soaring achievements of America's early supermen.

## Other national groups of folk tales

In addition to the groups of folk tales already discussed—Indian, Celtic, French, German, Norwegian, English, and the curious composite of tales in the United States—there are stories from innumerable other national groups. Should you wish to use a collection not mentioned here, look it up in the *Children's Catalog*, that unailing reference for librarians and all harried makers of bibliographies, or in the *Index to Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends* by Mary Huse Eastman. A discussion of a few of these national collections can perhaps give some idea of the richness and variety of folk tales available today from all countries.

### Arabian Nights

Do you remember from your childhood a thick book full of exceedingly long stories which were notable for their flying carpets, glittering jewels, a genie of the lamp, oil casks concealing robbers, the mystic password of "Open sesame"? The book was, of course, *The Arabian Nights*.

The origin of these "thousand and one" tales is confused and lost in antiquity, partly because they belonged to the people and were not considered polite literature. In the Moslem world they circulated only in the coffee houses and the market place. The sto-

ries are very old, some of them seeming to stem from ancient India, others from North Africa, with an early collection from Persia. The Frenchman, Antoine Galland, made his translation of them in 1704 from a manuscript sent to him from Syria but written in Egypt. So here again are old stories which have been inveterate travelers, with sources so ancient and varied that it is impossible to determine their true origin. We do know that Galland's translation of the tales into French, under the title *Les mille et une nuit*, was so popular that it was immediately translated into other languages, including English. Indeed, some of Galland's translated stories were even translated back into Oriental languages. The stories were fortunate in falling into the hands of a translator who was also a skillful storyteller. These tales of the Orient were given a Gallic touch, so they lack nothing of drama or color.

Today, children have turned away from most of these stories, which are exceedingly long and are difficult reading. The modern child seems to lack the time and patience to spend with fantasies which are overdetalled. However, certain of these stories have entered permanently into our speech and our think-

<sup>1</sup>Sgt. Glen Rounds' end pages for *Tall Tale America*, an amusing group of fabulous stories by Walter Blair.

ing so that a child who does not know them is distinctly the poorer. "Aladdin and His Lamp," "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," and "Sinbad the Sailor" seem to be the irreducible minimum every child needs and enjoys. The fairy-tale anthologies have kept these three stories circulating, but for the good reader a whole juvenile collection of Arabian tales is a happy reading experience.

### Czechoslovakian stories

The Czech stories are unusually amusing and have been translated into clear, vigorous English. They contain many variants of the Grimm stories which are, in most cases, more interesting than the German. "Clever Manka" is a better story than Grimm's "The Peasant's Wise Daughter." But the Fillmore books, the English sources of these tales, are out of print. "Budulinek," one of the finest, may be found on page 351, and *Time for Fairy Tales* preserves "Clever Manka." But new editions of Fillmore's books are needed.

### Finnish folk tales

Joseph Jacobs used to say that the Finns at Helsingfors had in manuscript form the largest group of folk tales in existence, a group he believed exceeded 12,000. But John Wargelin, President of Suomi College, recently stated that over 30,000 tales had been collected although only a small portion of them had been published. In spite of this wealth of Finnish stories, they have not been well known or much used in this country. Possibly the reasons are that they are both long and descriptive, and that the Finnish names are undoubtedly difficult. But they are a strong group of tales which will repay study and will be enjoyed by older children.

### Russian folk tales

A. M. Afanasiev collected the Russian folk tales as the Grimm brothers collected the German. Until recently there has been no English translation of the complete Afana-

siev collection, but now it is available in the Pantheon edition. These stories are for adult students of folklore, not for children. They are bloody and horrible but full of excitement and color. Certain of these tales are now rather generally familiar to American children—"The Snow Maiden" (sometimes called "Snegourka"), "The Firebird," and "Sadko." Every one of these lends itself to dramatization as well as to storytelling. These and other popular Russian stories are found in a good storytelling form in Arthur Ransome's *Old Peter's Russian Tales*.

### Spanish stories

One American storyteller, Ruth Sawyer, thinks the Irish stories are matched only by the Spanish, and her own collection seems to bear out her opinion. New and delightful stories for telling can be found in every one of the collections of Spanish tales listed in the bibliography for this chapter. The stories for the youngest children are full of fun while those for the older ones are full of grace.

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This chapter has discussed only a small proportion of the folk-tale collections available from the various racial groups. Add to these all the fairy-tale anthologies and all the modern fanciful tales, and you wonder if children read anything but make-believe. Some of them do stray off in that direction, especially little girls who may become so enthralled with fairy tales that they won't read anything else if they can help it. This extreme is just as unfortunate as the extremes of some children who do not want to read anything except the factual. If children are to be neither fantasy addicts nor precocious pedants, they must hear fairy tales in balanced proportion to other types of reading. Then these remarkable old tales may serve, like poetry, as a wholesome antidote to the tight literalness of the modern world, the high-pressure devotion to the here and now.

For generation after generation, the old folk tales have continued to be popular with children. Modern youngsters, surrounded by the mechanical gadgets and scientific wonders of our age, are still spellbound by the magic of the old tales. What needs can they possibly satisfy and what elements in these old stories give children pleasure?

### Distinctive elements of folk tales

The form, the style, and the character portrayal in the old folk tales are distinctly different from those of the modern short story. A brief examination of these distinctive elements may help explain the charm of the old tales for children and may help measure the probable appeal of modern stories being written for children today. First of all, the form or pattern of the folk tales is curiously satisfying both to children and adults.



Illustration by Randy Monk for  
*The Fables of India* by Joseph Goer,  
Little, 1955 (book  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ )

*King Tau-ny of Hard-to Pass Forest*  
is simply portrayed by Randy Monk.  
His animals, for all the talking they  
do in the fables, remain realistic.

Folk-tale form is as clear cut and definite as that of the old drama it closely resembles. The folk-tale pattern always provides for three easily discernible parts—the introduction, the development, and the conclusion.

### Introduction

The introduction does exactly what its name implies. It *introduces* the reader to the leading characters, the time and place of the story, the theme, and the problem to be solved, or the conflict which is the very breath of the story.

Usually the folk tales have *clear, robust themes* which are capable of supporting good plots. The theme is the idea of the story, the center of interest—what the story is about. Often it is expressed in the title or in a slight amplification of the title. For instance "The Lad Who Went to the North Wind" to get his rights for the stolen meal is a strong theme, around which a good action story is bound to develop. "Taper Tom" and how he made the princess laugh, "The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods," and "Hansel and Gretel" and the wicked witch—here are three very different themes, each capable of exciting development.

The themes often involve the element of *contrast*. Sometimes there is the uneven conflict, which always makes a story more exciting: "Hansel and Gretel" and the wicked witch—two little children pitted against an evil power; "The Three Little Pigs" and the wicked wolf. You realize at once that if pigs are going to survive in a wolf-infested world, they will have to keep their wits about them. Sometimes the contrast lies within a like group; for example, in "The Three Little Pigs," there are not only pigs and wolf but also a wise pig and foolish pigs. So in "Boots and His Brothers" (or, as it is sometimes entitled, "Per, Paal, and Espen Cindrelad") the humble Cinderlad shows the wisdom his older brothers lack. "One-Eye, Two-Eyes, and Three-Eyes" has a strange theme with a most unusual contrast in the three sisters. Obviously, contrast heightens the conflict and rouses

the reader's sympathy for the weaker or less fortunate or more kindly member of the group.

Folk-tale themes are not only strong but *objective* and *understandable*. They have to do with winning security, earning a living or a place in the world, accomplishing impossible tasks, escaping from powerful enemies, outwitting wicked schemes and schemers, and succeeding with nonchalance. These strong themes are as vital today as ever. They are the backbone of these old tales and largely account for their vigor. Weak, spineless themes make some of our modern juveniles seem feeble. Going to the store to get Mother's groceries can usually suggest only a negligible plot. No wonder children turn to television murders and Westerns. But "*The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*," murmurs Dr. Seuss, and forthwith launches a tale that would spellbind any generation. Or "*Angus Lost*," says Marjorie Flack, and charms the four-year-old. With a weak theme, there can be no story worth mentioning; with a robust theme, anything can happen, and it begins promptly in the introduction.

*Time* is effectively accounted for by a conventional phrase like "Once upon a time," "Long ago and far away," "In olden times when wishing still helped one," "A thousand years ago tomorrow," or "Once on a time, and a very good time too." Such folk-tale conventions do more than convey an idea of long ago; they carry the reader at once to a dream world where anything is possible.

The *scene* is even more briefly sketched. It is a road, a bridge, a palace, a forest, or a poor man's hut, and that's all—no interior decorations, no landscapes, just a place where something is going to happen and soon. No wonder these introductions catch the child's attention. They launch the conflict with no distracting or boring details.

Sometimes the folk tales, like the ballads, get off to such a brisk start that the introduction is almost imperceptible. This one for "*The Three Billy-Goats Gruff*" is a masterpiece of brevity:

Once on a time there were three Billy-goats, who were to go up to the hill-side to make themselves fat, and the name of all three was "Gruff."

On the way up was a bridge over a burn they had to cross; and under the bridge lived a great ugly Troll, with eyes as big as saucers, and a nose as long as a poker.

There you are! The scene is a bridge with a pleasant stretch of grassy hillside just beyond. The characters are three earnest billy goats of the Gruff family who are desirous of getting fat on the hillside. Obstacle, Conflict, Problem lives under the bridge in the person of an ugly Troll. In the fewest possible words, you have all the makings of a good plot. Obviously, only the simplest tale can get under way as rapidly as this. "The Sleeping Beauty," still a fairly uncomplicated story, must introduce the king, queen, courtiers, the grand christening for the baby princess in the palace, the good fairies for whom plates of gold have been prepared, and the evil fairy who is uninvited and minus a gold plate and therefore thoroughly angry. What will happen? This is the mark of a good introduction: it whets the appetite for more; you "go on" eagerly. For children, brevity of introduction is an important part of the charm of these folk tales. The excitement gets under way with minimum description. In comparison, the introductions of many modern stories are tiresomely wordy.

### Development

The development, sometimes called the body of the story, carries forward the note of trouble sounded in the introduction. The quest begins, the tasks are initiated and performed, the flight gets under way, and the obstacles of every kind appear, with the hero or heroine reduced to despair or helplessness or plunged into more and more perilous action. This is the heart of the story—action that mounts steadily until it reaches a climax, when the problem or conflict will be resolved one way or the other.

"The Sleeping Beauty" opens as six good fairies give their desirable gifts, the evil fairy

delivers her curse, and the seventh good fairy, who has been hiding, softly intervenes. The development introduces complications caused by this initial conflict. The king, hoping to avert disaster, issues his decree that all spinning wheels shall be burned. But he decrees in vain, for the princess reaches the fatal birthday, encounters an old woman (a wicked fairy, no doubt) at a spinning wheel, and pricks her finger on the spindle. The whole palace falls under the spell; every living thing sleeps; the hedge of thorns grows up, which nobles try vainly to penetrate. But after a hundred years, the prince bursts through the thorns to the sleeping princess and kisses her—climax! The spell is broken, and the concluding action is brief and rapid.

The development of the story is really the *plot*—what happens to the theme. The vigorous plots of the folk tales, full of suspense and action, appeal strongly to young readers. The heroes *do* things—they ride up glass hills, slay giants who have no hearts in their bodies, outwit big bad wolves, get their rights from the North Wind, or pitch an old witch into an oven she intended for them. Here are no brooding introspectionists but doers of the most vigorous sort. And the plot that unfolds their doings has logic, unity, and economy.

First, their *logic*. If these action plots are to carry conviction, the development must be both logical and plausible. When, in "The Three Little Pigs," one pig is so foolish as to build a house of straw and another to build a house of sticks, you know they are doomed. But when a pig has sufficient acumen to build his house stoutly of bricks, you know perfectly well he will also be smart enough to outwit his adversaries, for such a pig will survive in any society. Another example of a logical, plausible plot development is "Clever Manka," the witty Czech story that is a favorite with older children. Manka by her cleverness wins a fine husband, a judge and burgo-master; but he warns her that she will be banished from his house if she ever uses her cleverness to interfere with his business. Knowing Manka and realizing that no one

can help using what wit the Lord gave him, you feel the conflict approaching. Of course Manka learns of a case where her husband has rendered a flagrantly unfair judgment, and in the interest of justice she cannot resist interfering. She is found out and banished, but in the face of this ultimate catastrophe, she uses her wit and saves both herself and her beloved husband from permanent unhappiness. Here is a realistic folk tale of clever mind against duller mind, with the clever one saving them both. The ending is surprising but is still completely logical and plausible.

A good folk-tale plot must also preserve *unity of interest*, which means the centering of attention on the theme. Every episode in "The Lad Who Went to the North Wind" concerns the boy's struggles to get his rights for the meal that the North Wind blew away. "The Three Little Pigs" never deflects the reader from his intense preoccupation with the third pig's attempts to win security in a wolf-haunted world. In "Cinderella," the activities of the two spiteful sisters only heighten our concern for Cinderella and the desire to have her win the place she deserves in the world. And in "The Bremen Town-Musicians," interest in the forlorn musicians is not drawn away by the new interest in the robbers. The robbers may be ever so picturesque; they may even be kind to their families—we don't know or care. Our only concern with them is that the musicians shall drive them out of the neighborhood for good and all. So the best of the fairy tales maintain a strict unity, and the reader's interests are not divided.

And to achieve this unity, a story must preserve a decent *economy of incidents*. Too many episodes, too long-drawn-out suspense, or too much magic destroys the unity of the tale. The development often contains three tasks or three riddles or three trials. Perhaps there is no particular significance in the "three" except that the old storyteller, always properly audience-conscious, as a good storyteller should be, could see for himself that

suspense can be endured just so long before people get impatient. After three rides up a glass hill, they demand results. Molly can use her bridge of one hair three times and after that she had better finish things off and get home. The pattern of three, of course, does not always hold; there may be more episodes if the conflict is fierce enough and the suspense is so engrossing that the storyteller can safely prolong it. For it is on *suspense* that the successful development of folk-tale action depends. Suspense is built up and maintained until it reaches a peak in the climax, after which it declines and the action ends with a flourish.

The Arabian tales, the American Indian stories, and many of the Russian tales develop too many incidents. One involved episode follows another until you almost forget what the hero was up to in the first place. Magic is piled upon magic until your credulity gives out under the strain. The most successful stories maintain sufficient economy of incident to focus the reader's attention on the major theme or conflict, and to send his mind racing eagerly ahead to a logical working-out of the problems.

### Conclusion

The third part of the story, the conclusion, usually comes as swiftly and briefly as the introduction. In "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff," the ringing challenge of the biggest billy goat announces the climax. The fight ensues, the biggest billy goat is the winner, and the Gruff family is now free to eat grass and get fat for the rest of its days. In "The Sleeping Beauty," the kiss breaks the spell for the princess and the whole court, the royal wedding quickly takes place, and that ought to be all except for the conventional blessing "and they lived happily ever after." But the old folk tale thought otherwise, for a second story begins, a kind of sequel in which poor Beauty finds herself with an ogress for a mother-in-law and another conflict to be resolved. Whether or not the nature-symbolism theory or the bad-dream



theory accounts for this second part is of small importance. It is poor story form and children don't much like it, as the storytellers have discovered. Most versions now conclude with the wedding of Beauty and the prince, omitting the ogress section entirely.

The conclusion, then, should follow swiftly on the heels of the climax and should end everything that was started in the introduction. Not only must the heroes and heroines achieve a happy solution for their troubles and a triumphant end to their struggles, but the villains must also be accounted for and satisfyingly punished. When extreme measures are indicated by the heinousness of the crimes, many folk tales have a neat formula for shifting the responsibility. Someone consults the villain about a fitting punishment for a creature who would do all these awful things, and the villain, whose imagination has evidently been working fertilily along these lines, can't resist showing off. He suggests putting the offender in a keg studded with nails and rolling him downhill into a lake; so *he* is given this very punishment and has no one to blame but himself. These conclusions satisfy the child's eye-for-an-eye code of ethics and apparently leave his imagination untroubled—probably because they have no harrowing details and are so preposterous that they move cheerfully out of reality.

The fairy tale has some conventional endings that are as picturesque as the opening lines. "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff" concludes

*Snip, snap, snout  
This tale's told out.*

Other endings are: "If they haven't left off their merry-making yet, why, they're still at it"; "A mouse did run, the story's done"; "And no one need ask if they were happy"; "Whosoever does not believe this must pay a taler" (or as we should say, a dollar); "And the mouth of the person who last told this is still warm"; "And now the joy began in earnest. I wish you had been there too." For little children, the chance to vary the name

in the last line of the following conclusion makes it one of their favorites.

*My tale is done,  
Away it has run  
To little Augusta's house.*

### Style

One of the charms of the folk tale is its characteristic style—the language and manner of telling the story. The definition on page 25 helps explain its magic: "...style is simply the auditory or sensory element in prose." For these tales were never read silently; they were told until their form and language patterns were fixed. Consider: "Go I know not whither, bring back I know not what," or

*"Little pig, little pig, let me come in."  
"No, no, by the hair of my chinny chin chin."  
"Then I'll huff and I'll puff and I'll blow your house in."*

or in the Scotch tale, "Whippety Stourie," the conversation with the wee fairy ladies that turned the stern husband from trying to make a spinner of his wife,

*"Would you mind telling me," he asked them, "why it is that your mouths are all as lopsided as a fir-tree leaning against the wind?"*

*Then the six wee ladies burst into loud, lopsided laughter, and Whippety Stourie herself replied:*

*"Och, it's with our constant spin-spin-spinning. For we're all of us great ones for the spinning, and there's no surer way to a lopsided mouth."*

or that matchless ending, "As for the Prince and Princess, they . . . fitted away as far as they could from the castle that lay East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon." These are brief examples of fairy-tale style—frequently cadenced, sometimes humorous, sometimes romantic—with the words suited to the mood and tempo of the tale.

The beginnings and endings of the stories, of course, are particularly good examples of the storyteller's skill in establishing the predominant mood of the story, or breaking off

and sending the listeners back to their workaday world. But dialogue in these old stories is also a part of their style—it runs along so naturally that real people seem to be talking. Read aloud the conversation between the old man and his wife in "Gudbrand on the Hill-side." Never once does the swift interchange of news and comments falter for a descriptive phrase such as "said he *uneasily*," or "said she *reassuringly*." There is nothing literary here, just a rapid, natural give-and-take between two people.

"Nay, but I haven't got the goat either," said Gudbrand, "for a little farther on I swopped it away, and got a fine sheep instead."

"You don't say so!" cried his wife: "why you do everything to please me, just as if I had been with you. What do we want with a goat! . . . Run out child, and put up the sheep."

"But I haven't got the sheep any more than the rest," said Gudbrand; "for when I had gone a bit farther I swopped it away for a goose."

"Thank you! thank you! with all my heart," cried his wife. . . .

So they proceed from disaster to disaster without a single literary interpolation. Notice, too, that the words suffice to establish unmistakably the attitude of each speaker. Words so perfectly chosen make long descriptions unnecessary.

Another characteristic of fairy-tale style is the use of rhymes. Indeed, the stories are sometimes part prose and part verse in the old sing-and-say pattern of "Aucassin et Nicolette." Cante-fables, such stories are called—that is, singing stories or verse stories. The frequency of rhymes in some of the old folk tales has caused some speculation about whether the fairy tales came from the ballads or the ballads from the tales, since both often have the same subjects ("Earl Mar's Daughter," "Binnorie," "Childe Rowland," and "The Laidly Worm," to mention a few). This is a matter for the specialists to settle, but certainly the little rhymes add greatly to the interest of the tales.

"The Well of the World's End" ("The Frog-King") alternates prose and verse, with

the frog singing over and over the same words except for the request in the first two lines in which he raises his demands each time:

"Give me some supper, my hinny, my heart,  
Give me some supper, my darling;  
Remember the words you and I spake,  
In the meadow, by the Well of the World's  
End."

Some of the prettiest verses in the fairy tales are in Grimm's "The Goose-Girl" and in the English "The Black Bull of Norro-way." The former breaks into rhyme when the faithful horse, Falada, speaks to his mistress. And after he has been killed and his head nailed to the dark gateway, the Goose-Girl, who is really the princess, weeps beneath the gateway saying

"Alas, Falada, hanging there!"

Then the head answered:

"Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare!  
If this your mother knew,  
Her heart would break in two."

This piteous dialogue is followed by the song of the Goose-Girl, putting a spell on young Conrad, because he takes too much delight in her golden hair:

"Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,  
Blow Conrad's little hat away,  
And make him chase it here and there,  
Until I have braided all my hair,  
And bound it up again."

Grimm's "Cinderella," "Hänsel and Gretel," "The Fisherman and His Wife," the tragic "The Juniper Tree," "Little Snow-White," and many others have memorable rhymes which some grown-ups can still recite from early recollections. The English tales are especially full of them. But many other folk tales are marked by the subtle art of the storyteller who has perfected a fine oral pattern in which rhymes frequently appear.

#### Character portrayal

The interest of the modern short story frequently depends far more upon characters than upon plot or action. This is not true of

the fairy tales. Plot is of first importance, and the characters are more or less typed. There are humble slaveys, misunderstood and abused; there are wicked, jealous relatives and proud, pompous kings; and of course there are third sons and third daughters, loving and loyal. The good people in these stories are altogether good, and the wicked are so completely wicked that we waste no sympathy on them when, in the end, they are liquidated. So, too, the animals in the folk tales stand for simple traits like loyalty, cleverness, slyness, cruelty. Yet the characters are not completely typed. For instance, there is a significant difference between the characters in the fairy tale and those in the fable. In a fable, there would be a silly hen, impersonal as X, and the story worked out as logically and unemotionally as an equation. In the fairy tale, Henny-Penny is one particular hen (really one particular person), absurd and credulous but still an individual who enlists our sympathy and with whom we suffer anxiety and relief.

Look for the brief flashes of characterization in every story. Cinderella is a teen-age girl with her mind on balls and fine clothes. Red Riding Hood is good-hearted but not too dependable. The Lad who went to the North Wind to get his rights for the wasted meal is one of those dogged, stick-to-itive boys who, with right on their side, are going to get their way in the world or know the reason why. And as for the lad's mother, you can just see her, the old skeptic, shaking her

head and saying, "All very true, I daresay, but seeing is believing, and I shan't believe it till I see it." There, in a flash, is a complete character sketch of the doubter, the cynic.

Sometimes the characters are passive—like the sleeping Beauty, the lass in "Tom Tit Tot" ("Rumpelstiltskin"), the pathetic Goose-Girl, or the remote princess on the glass hill—but they are still sufficiently individual so that each one arouses different reactions. Beauty's doom, hanging over her youth and loveliness like a black cloud, inspires only pity. But the silly, feckless girl in "Tom Tit Tot," with her big appetite and meager wit, is so absurd that you don't particularly mind the hard bargain "that" drives with her. The gentle nonresistance of the Goose-Girl arouses sympathy, but the princess atop the slippery glass hill is merely a symbol of success until she comes to life and rolls a golden apple to the handsome cinder lad. Then we know she is human after all. "Would to heaven he might only come up, and down the other side," she cries in her loneliness, and so we discover that even the inaccessible, the toplofty, have their feelings.

So while fairy-tale people are strongly typed as "good" or "bad" with no subtle distinctions between them, they are also individualized. Sympathy or antagonism is aroused in different degrees by the brief characterizations. A whole portrait gallery of lads and lassies, goose-girls and princesses, kings and queens remains in your memory, distinct and convincingly true to human nature.

## Why use the folk tales with modern children?

A famous English poet, W. H. Auden, reviewed the Pantheon edition of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* for the *New York Times* (November 12, 1944). He made this rather startling statement:

For, among the few indispensable, common-property books upon which Western Culture can be founded—that is, excluding the national genius of specific peoples as exemplified by Shakespeare and Dante—it is hardly too much to

say that these tales rank next to the Bible in importance.

Later in the review he added:

It will be a mistake, therefore, if this volume is merely bought as a Christmas present for a child; it should be, first and foremost, an educational "must" for adults, married or single, for the reader who has once come to know and love these tales will never be able again to endure the insipid rubbish of contemporary entertainment.

Yet some people raise a great hue and cry about the ethics of the fairy tales. They wonder whether children should read about Bluebeard's gory collection of ex-wives, or about a girl who tricks a giant into killing his own offspring in place of the trembling human children who had taken refuge in his castle. People so protective of children might also inquire whether they should read about Jacob tricking his brother Esau out of his birthright, or about the terrors of Daniel in the den of lions.

### Ethical truth

Of course, the fairy-tale ethics are not always acceptable to the modern moral code. These stories were told by adults to adults in an age when using wits against brute force was often the only means of survival, and therefore admirable. But even today, in wars upon crime—whether crimes against individuals or nations—trickery, ruthlessness, and killing are accepted as necessary. Not a pretty code, but a realistic one. In the fairy tales, then, witches and ogres are destroyed or defeated according to the common-sense code of survival.

But fairy tales are predominantly constructive, not destructive, in their moral lessons. "The humble and good shall be exalted," say the stories of "Little Snow-White," "Cinderella," "The Bremen Town-Musicians," and dozens of others. "Love suffereth long and is kind," is the lesson of "East o' the Sun" and "One-Eye, Two-Eyes, and Three-Eyes." In "The Frog-King," the royal father of the princess enforces a noble code upon his thoughtless daughter. "That which you have promised must you perform," he says sternly, and again, "He who helped you when you were in trouble ought not afterwards to be despised by you." Indeed, so roundly and soundly do these old tales stand for morality that they leave an indelible impression of virtue invariably rewarded and evil unfailingly punished. The wicked witch is fed into the oven prepared for a helpless little boy; and the lovely princess and half the kingdom always reward the hard-working, kindly lad

who has a cheerful way with him. Here, in these fairy tales, is the world as it ought to be—sometimes ruthless of necessity but sound at the core. Can this world and this code hurt a child?

### Satisfaction of needs

Most grown-ups rereading these stories begin to understand Mr. Auden's feeling that they are timeless in their appeal. Plumbing, kitchen gadgets, and modes of transportation may change, but human desires and human emotions continue strong and unchanging. These old fairy tales contain in their "picture language" the symbols of some of the deepest human feelings, and satisfy in fantasy human desires for security, achievement, and love.

Everyone longs for security, the simple physical security of a snug house, warmth, and good food. In the fairy tales, the little hut in the forest is cozy and warm, safe from ravening wolves, and full of the peace of the fireside, with a loaf of bread baking on the hearth and a flavorsome kettle of soup on the hob. And of course there are castles, too; they may be a bit cold and drafty, but Jack or Tattercoats or Espen Cinderlad always seems to settle down very comfortably in the new grandeur. Children identify themselves with both the elegance of the castle and the snug security of the house in the woods. Both are satisfying: the castle speaks of achievement, the little hut of peace and security.

Human beings are always in search of love. There will never be a time when people do not need loving reinforcement against the hostile world and the frightening thought of death. The old tales are full of loving compensations for fears and hardships. Hänsel reassures his little sister and protects her as long as he is able, and Gretel comes to his rescue when he is helpless and in peril. Commoners and royalty alike pursue their lost loves and endure every kind of suffering to free them from unhappy enchantments. A competent peasant boy rescues a lonely princess from her glass hill, and a prince gives all his love to Cinderella, the lowly cinder

wench who so sadly needs it. There is cruelty in these old tales, and danger too, but they are not exaggerated. The real world, like the fairy world, can be cruel and perilous. Reassuring in these stories are the bright symbols of love, fortifying the weak, the misunderstood, and the oppressed, giving them sanctuary in peril and reinforcement in their weakness, and rewarding their courageous struggles.

People long not only for love and security but for achievement. They are eager to overcome difficulties, to right wrongs, and to stand fast in the face of danger—abilities essential for heroes of any generation. The fairy tales supply unforgettable stories of wicked powers defeated and of gallant souls who in their extremity are granted supernatural strength. Whether children are conscious of it or not, these stories may become sources of moral strength—a strength which is part faith and part courage, and is wholly unshakable.

### Variety

There is a fairy story for every mood. There are drolls and romances, tales of horror and of beauty. Fairy tales cover every range of feeling.

Undoubtedly their first appeal to children is *exciting action*. Things happen in these stories with just the hair-raising rapidity that

children yearn for in real life and rarely find. For this reason, a child who reads too many fairy tales may find everyday life painfully dull and static—no beanstalks to climb, no giants to kill, no witches to outwit. The action in the fairy tales does fill a definite need, however. Before the child is ready to understand and follow character development, these active heroes are lads after his own heart.

There is sometimes a strange quiet about these stories. The forest is so still you can hear one bird singing; a little lamb speaks softly to a fish in a brook; the enchanted castle is silent; and the prince falls asleep by the fountain from which gently flows the water of life. Reading some of these strange tales, you feel yourself relaxing. Here there is time for everything, even a little nap by magic waters. Compared with any moving-picture version of fairy tales, the old words make immeasurably better pictures, create stronger moods, and refresh and relax to a degree which only music or poetry can approach. The three are closely related: children who have learned to love the fairy tales will be equipped to enjoy music and poetry too. Moreover, they will have discovered the wonders of tranquillity and quiet in the midst of a noisy, restless world. As adults they will have inner resources because their spirits have been fed richly and well.

## Misuses of the folk tales

### Teaching morals

Every so often, adults are seized by an attack of earnestness and feel that the fairy tales should either be abolished entirely or related for some useful end. Because some of the tales have a strong moral flavor, one of the early misuses made of them was to select and tell them for moral lessons. For instance, "Little Red Riding Hood" was used to show the moral of disobedience properly punished, a moral underscored by the storyteller. But one of England's great illustrators carried this unpleasant practice still further. George Cruikshank (p. 51), who made the

pictures for the first English edition of the Grimms' tales and also for many of Dickens' novels, issued his own collection of fairy tales—*The Cruikshank Fairy-Book*. He took four old tales—"Puss in Boots," "The Story of Jack and the Bean-Stalk," "Hop-o'-My-Thumb and the Seven-League Boots," and "Cinderella and the Glass Slipper"—and rewrote them completely, making them carry some of the useful moral lessons he felt they lacked. "Cinderella" was interrupted for three pages of "Temperance Truths, with a fervent hope that some good may result therefrom." Librarians keep this book only as a curiosity.

Fortunately, methods like Cruikshank's have been defeated by their obvious absurdity and by children's healthy resistance to them. The great moral truths inherent in many of the tales will take effect without hammering them home. While children may not get all their implications at the time, they will, through repetition and experience, gradually absorb the moral values. And occasionally children make their own applications of the morals. A group of children had been hearing "The Princess on the Glass Hill," and after a violent electrical storm one six-year-old remarked complacently, "We were just like Boots, weren't we? We stood it." The teacher laughed and said, "Sure enough you did stand it, just as Boots did when the barn shivered and shook." The children were delighted. This was very different from preaching, "Now children, this story teaches us that we must stand firm even when we are frightened." The morals speak for themselves and need no underscoring.

#### **Forced retelling by young children**

A second misuse of folk tales is to expect young children to retell them for language development and practice. One or two children are always eager to retell their favorite stories and often do it acceptably, but in the primary grades such a task is a catastrophe for many children. Not only are the plots too complex and the dialogue too fast moving and subtle, but there is a polished perfection about the style of these old tales that is beyond the little child's powers of narration. It is as if he were asked in his music periods to sing a Brahms waltz or a Chopin prelude, which he may thoroughly enjoy hearing but is incapable of reproducing. The worst of having

young children laboriously retell folk tales is that their unfortunate listeners are bored beyond endurance. The tale is ruined for both narrator and audience. Your older child may tell a story well, but on the whole, it is better for primary children to have their oral language practice with easier materials. Talking about their own experiences is a necessity to young children, but retelling a folk tale with its distinctive style and pattern may be far too difficult for most of them.

#### **Introduced to children too early**

Children reach the peak of interest in fairy tales when they are around seven, eight, and nine years old, not four or five as some people once thought. There are some stories, of course, that the youngest children ask for again and again: a few beast tales like "The Three Little Pigs" and "The Little Red Hen," and also the accumulative stories. The pre-reading child should not miss these nursery classics. But for the most part, he is passionately concerned with his own realistic world of trains and autos, stores and houses, real dogs and real goats. Fairies and giants are not for him as yet, although he accepts the troll under the bridge matter-of-factly enough. For him, apparently the troll is just something to wheedle or to fight with.

"Cinderella," "Hansel and Gretel," "East o' the Sun," and "Molly Whuppie" are far better for children of eight or nine than five or six. And there are other folk tales that are best for ten- and eleven-year-olds and even older: tales like "Sadko," "The Most Obedient Wife," and the American tall tales. Since there are some fairy stories right for every age, it is a mistake to force the stories on children who are too young for them.

#### **Desirable uses of the folk tales**

##### **For entertainment**

**F**irst and foremost, these old tales should be read just for fun. The relaxation and entertainment in the promise of "Once upon

a time" are a justification for the stories at any age or any hour. They are so close to poetry that all that has been said about the use of verse applies again to the fairy tales. When things have been tense or difficult, try

a story and relax. Have the kindergarten children had their first fire drill? Tell them "The Pancake" and make them laugh. Or when a factual study has driven the older children hard and they are getting a bit stale, take them to "The Well of the World's End" and they will come back refreshed. Keep a book of these tales in the room to pick up at any time just for pleasure. These stories do not have to "correlate" with any study unit; they do not have to teach something. Whether romance or sheer nonsense, nursery tale or allegory, their power of entertainment is their first reason for existence and our first reason for using them.

### With racial groups

As suggested before, the folk tales may become a teacher's open sesame to friendship in a neighborhood made up of a somewhat homogeneous racial group. One teacher will never forget telling Irish fairy tales at a mothers' and daughters' party where most of the mothers had been born in Ireland. When she began, the girls looked a bit self-conscious, but the mothers' eyes were bright and responsive.

"I heard that story another way," said one mother when the teacher had finished.

"How did yours go?" she asked. The mother outlined the differences clearly, but added, "Mrs. O'Connor's the one for stories. She knows dozens of them."

Between them, they persuaded the reluctant Mrs. O'Connor to tell a story. Proud of her art, she told "Hudden and Dudden and Donald O'Neary" to perfection. They all laughed, and the girls lost their self-consciousness. Over the refreshments, everyone compared notes on the Irish stories she knew and agreed to exchange some of her favorites the next time they met. One of the girls said, "I've a young aunt just over from Ireland and you should hear *her* tell stories. May I bring her next time?" Of course the teacher agreed, and so began a series of story-telling exchanges ranging from the hilarious "King O'Toole and His Goose" to bits of the

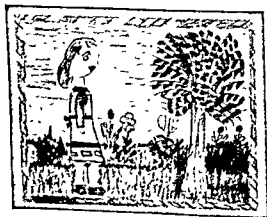
Cuchulain epic. Even by the second meeting, they were no longer teacher, pupils, and mothers; they were just friends.

Another teacher, finding herself in a neighborhood that was largely Czech and Bohemian, began to tell the English versions of old Czech tales. She consulted the children about the pronunciation of proper names, and they patiently set her straight and enjoyed the reversal of rôles, teacher turned pupil. Presently they were saying, "My mother knows 'Smollicheck,'" or "My grandfather knows stories like those and lots more, too." The stories led to reports on Czech customs, festivals, and special treasures the families had brought with them from the Old World. Finally an all-school exhibition and party was inevitable. Beautiful costumes, embroideries, glassware, and pottery were displayed; parents sang songs in Czech and danced the folk dances, while the children told and dramatized the stories. The refreshments included Czech breads and pastries. Not only did everyone have fun, but there was a new and warmer relationship between school and family, based on respect and friendly interest.

In a college class which was telling folk tales, a student hearing one of the Grimm stories exclaimed in astonishment, "Why, that is like a story my father tells me in Italian!" After she had looked up some Italian collections, she said, "But my father tells other stories not in those books. Should I write them down?"

"Of course you should!" chorused the whole group. And when last heard of, this young woman was trying to reduce her extremely active father to a sufficiently sedentary state to dictate his stories to her.

So folk tales may lead straight into the homes of the children and develop a common bond between two generations and between two or more racial groups. In a school where different races mingle, a rich and beautiful program can be developed around "Folk Tales of Many Countries," with typical stories told, dramatized, played by puppets and



mationettes, and illustrated by the children with paints and clay modeling. The likenesses as well as fascinating differences among all peoples will be dramatically evident.

#### For illustration

As subjects for modeling or painting, the fairy tales are unsurpassed. One man's guess is as good as another's in illustrating them, because no one can tell anyone else the precise measurements and equipment of a fairy godmother. A third grade illustrated "Budulinek" with diverse artistic effects. One child portrayed Granny, wearing a frivolous hat and carrying a large pocketbook in modern style. Other young artists drew the interior of the room with the closed door and a bowl on the table. But everyone wanted to paint Budulinek going for a ride on Lishka's tail.

<sup>1</sup>Roxboro School, Cleveland Heights; teacher, Miss Evelyn Brockway.

Children's imaginations have full play in illustrating fairy tales. The drawing for "The Three Bears" shows as jaunty a bear family as ever went strolling woodward. The picture for "Mother Holle" suggests the timid, lonely girl, the mystery of trees which talk, and the hesitant approach to the unknown. Exciting moments in the story of "Budulinek" are pictured in the last three illustrations. Drawings are from (1) Mayfair School, East Cleveland; (2) Charles Dickens School, Cleveland; (3, 4, and 5) Roxboro School, Cleveland Heights.





Illustration by Marcia Brown for *Dick Whittington*,  
Scribner, 1950 (original in color, book 7½ x 9½)

*Compare sturdy Dick Whittington with fantastic Puss (p. 308) or gentle Cinderella (p. 10) and you will begin to sense Marcia Brown's ability to adapt her style to the spirit of the tale. Her illustrations are truly interpretative.*

Each picture shows Lishka as genuinely fox-like with a fine brush of a tail on which the naughty Budulinek perches jauntily. The pair are pictured hurrying through some dramatic landscapes, the best these third-graders had ever done. "Hansel and Gretel," "Mother Holle," "Cinderella," and dozens of others are beautiful subjects for illustration and send the children's imaginations soaring. Needless to say, no book pictures should be visible when the children are making their own illustrations.

#### For dramatization

Any discussion of folk tales and children eventually leads to the possibilities of dramatization. Even in the nursery school, mere babies begin playing "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff," although not in conventional style. Some children were riding their "bikes" when suddenly one called out belligerently, "I'm goin' to gobble you up."

Immediately the challenge was answered, not according to the letter of Dasent's text but true to the spirit.

"No you won't. You just wait for my big brother. He's bigger. He's lots bigger."

"All right, be off."

Again the challenge and a giggling answer from another bicyclist, until finally the third challenge brought a loud reply.

"O.K., you just come on. I've got horns, I have. Come on."

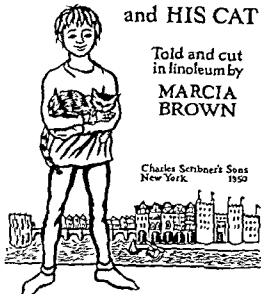
Two bicycles clashed—rather mildly—and the ferocious troll and billy goat roared with laughter.

"Now you gotta fall down dead," prompted the goat.

So the self-appointed troll obliged by fall-

## DICK WHITTINGTON and HIS CAT

Told and cut  
in linoleum by  
**MARCIA  
BROWN**



ing off his bike, and everyone laughed again. One of the children said hastily, while the troll was still down and unable to protest, "Now, I'll be the troll," and it started all over.

These were four-year-olds; this was their drama. It was crude and spotty with no attempt to reproduce the scene or the correct action, yet these children had selected the very heart of the drama—the conflict which makes this and most of the other folk tales essentially dramatic and fascinating to children of all ages.

The kindergarten also enjoys playing "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff" and "The Three Bears." The first- and second-graders like "The Bremen Town-Musicians," "The Sleeping Beauty," and "Hansel and Gretel." These early dramatizations should be the children's own, not fussed up by adults into something finished and correctly dramatic. Polished performances are all right for an assembly or for a P.T.A. meeting, provided they are only occasional. Then costuming these little dramas and carrying them through in some detail may be justifiable and desirable. For everyday fun, trust young children to mangle the text a bit but to come out with the



Madison Public Schools

essence of the conflict every time. As a matter of fact, children soon develop a sense of form and dramatic sequence by themselves if we don't press our adult standards upon them prematurely.

Don't try to have the children dramatize every story. There is nothing deadlier than a perfunctory, routine dramatization every day. Once or twice a week will probably be the limit. When dramatic stories cry out to be played, let the children try them. One of these will come to life so gaily and completely that nothing will do but an assembly or a sortie upon the grade next door for the satisfaction of sharing the story with an audience.

From the fourth grade up, dramatizations diminish as factual studies increase. But still the children love them and should have a fling at them three or four times a year. The group composition of a play—outlining acts, scenes, and action—is a fine English experience for upper grades. The dialogue usually remains fluid, chiefly because children cannot

*Marionette plays provide an opportunity for organizing, interpreting, and supplementing reading experiences. They are particularly valuable in the middle grades, where children are interested in costumes, stage properties, and planned dialogue.*

endure the mechanical bother of much writing, but occasionally an especially able group may even write down its dialogue.

### With puppets

Self-consciousness begins to trouble older children, and, worse still, the eleven- or twelve-year-old girls have a way of turning into young Amazons, leaving the boys their age embarrassingly smaller. So for the upper grades, puppets or marionettes are likely to be more popular than straight dramatization. Stick puppets are the easiest and the crudest; hand puppets are next easiest and have a great range of possibilities; marionettes are the most difficult. Shadow plays are also charming. They are all ideal media for the beauty and fantasy of fairy tales. "Hänsel and Gretel," "Cinderella," "Sadko," and "Rumpelstiltskin" can be remarkably beautiful when given as puppet shows.

Scenery, properties, and puppets are fun to make and fun to work with. The dreamlike quality and magic of the fairy tales can be more exquisitely suggested with these small creatures than they can be by human beings. And the tiny properties only enhance the magic—Rumpelstiltskin's pile of straw turned to gold, the Czar of the Sea's coral palace, the old witch and her gingerbread cottage, and Cinderella's pumpkin transformed into a splendid coach are especially convincing in the small. The puppets or marionettes are fascinating to manipulate and offer the protection of anonymity to the children who play the parts. In fact, children often become so attached to their particular puppet that they will ask if they can take it home with them. These glorified dolls, with personalities, movement, and speech, have interested adults through many centuries and make a delight-

ful hobby for children (see Bibliography for books on puppets).

### With social studies

Although social studies are factual and fairy tales quite the reverse, they may supplement each other. If, for instance, a class is studying colonial life in Nieuw Amsterdam, the work may be enlivened and research motivated by dramatizing "The Gift of St. Nicholas."<sup>1</sup> After the children have heard the story, they might work it into this form.

Act I: A gay street in Nieuw Amsterdam on Christmas Eve, with a background of shop windows painted by the children. People with bundles hurry by with cheery Christmas greetings. Children skip along, talking of Christmas goodies, sometimes stopping for a Dutch ring dance. Three ragged children peer wistfully into a toy shop window. Old Roeloffsen the burgomaster points them out gloatingly—"The children of Claas the cobbler with hardly a shoe to their feet. Anitje will be sorry she didn't marry me now."

Act II: A bare, dreary room, dimly lighted, with the children huddled around the feeble coals. Claas and Anitje are talking over their misfortunes when the stranger knocks. The story supplies the dialogue and action for this scene. The magical appearance of the birch logs on the fire and the feast in the oven is done by having the stranger command the family to "Shut your eyes and look again. Maybe you'll see better." In the moment of darkness the scene is changed. The act ends with the feast, a thanksgiving hymn, and a gay dance led by the stranger.

Act III: Same room, richly furnished, with the chest full of money in a conspicuous place. The burgomaster pounds on the door, startling the sleeping Claas by accusing him of being a wizard. The dialogue and action are found in the story, as Roeloffsen opens the chest and is forced to beat a hasty retreat from the "unseen paddlers"—who may be St. Nicholas himself. The play ends with Claas

and Anitje inviting the neighbors to a feast and merrymaking.

Such a play involves research to find out clothing of the period; what stores, furniture, music, and dancers were like; and the Dutch legends of St. Nicholas. In addition, it stimulates original composition, art work, and music.

In the same way, one class climaxed an Indian unit by performing "Little Burnt-Face." Before their play, the children explained to the audience that the story was a nature myth of the Southwest. "Little Burnt-Face" was the parched desert burned with the sun, and the invisible chief was the spring rain that brought beauty once again to the desert.<sup>2</sup>

*Pecos Bill* was the English center of a Westward Expansion unit. It might easily have turned into a puppet play. Instead, after the children had read the whole book and retold it at home, they developed their own tall tales. The boys were at their best as they chewed straws, tipped their hats down over their eyes, or with legs crossed sprawled in chairs and told yarn after yarn in the manner of old Pecos Bill himself.<sup>3</sup>

Since fairy tales have been collected from most of the countries the children are likely to study, and since such tales are often easier for children to dramatize than the more realistic stories, they supplement the social studies program admirably.

### For storytelling by older children

Upper-grade children had unusual fun with fairy tales in one school which was an experiment station for English activities of all kinds. The fifth-grade children had listened to stories told over the radio by Miss Margaret Clark,<sup>4</sup> one of the best storytellers in the city, and had read other tales as well. They decided to tell some of their favorites to younger children. They formed themselves into the

<sup>1</sup>Ethical Culture School, New York City.

<sup>2</sup>Caledonia School, East Cleveland, teacher, Miss Ethel Hunter.

<sup>3</sup>Laboratory in charge of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library.

<sup>4</sup>From *American Myths and Legends* by Charles M. Skinner, also found in *Time for Fairy Tales*, p. 191.

Children's Storytelling Club, learned their stories well, and told them to the primary grades with such zest that the primaries were delighted. The fifth-grade Storytellers carried on this activity for a whole semester and not only enjoyed themselves but grew appreciably in poise, language power, and ability to interest and hold an audience.<sup>1</sup>

## When to read and when to tell stories

### Why tell stories

It would be reassuring to say that it is always just as well to read stories aloud as it is to tell them, but unfortunately it is not true. Of course stories are better when read well than when told poorly, but children miss a unique experience with literature if they never hear a gifted storyteller. The folk tales, particularly, should be told, for they were created orally and kept alive through generations by oral transmission.

In the first place, storytelling is more direct than reading. There is no book between you and your audience, and you can give the story plus your own enjoyment of it with more freedom than you can when you are following the precise words on the page. Your facial expression, your occasional gestures, and your inflections all respond to the audience just as they do when you regale your family or friends with an account of some exciting experience you have had. The younger the children, the more they need this intimate approach to literature, because words are still difficult symbols for them. When you are free of the book, you can observe their confusions and throw in the much-needed parenthetical phrase which never occurred to the editor. "Then the princess—the king's little girl," you add hastily for the sixth. Even with ten-year-olds, when you mention "a well of scythes" and see their bewildered expressions, of course you inter-

When other schools have had storytelling groups or clubs, they, too, have turned to the folk tales for materials. "But why *tell* these stories?" young teachers sometimes ask. "Why not read them aloud to the children?" These are good questions which open up the whole problem of which stories should be told and which read.

polate "a well whose walls were all lined with sharp knives or scythes," and go blithely on. Or, when you observe Peter's unflattering yawn, you take your narrative at a livelier tempo or style. There is undoubtedly more spontaneity possible in storytelling than in reading aloud and hence a more natural, informal quality creeps into the stories. This intimacy is especially good for little children in school for the first time.

Even if you work with older children, it is not only good for *them* to hear stories told now and then, but it is good for *you* to tell them. Nothing else will give you so sharp and sure a sense of style. This fact was emphasized by Wanda Gág. She said:

*When I was a child my favorite funny Märchen was one about a peasant who wanted to do housework. I have never forgotten either the tale itself or the inimitable way in which it was told to me in German. . . . No doubt this tale exists in some German collections. There must be English versions of it too, for by questioning various children, I found them to be familiar with it, but only vaguely so. From this I concluded that it had never been presented to them as it had been to me—that is, in a full-flavored conversational style and with a sly peasant humor which has made the tale unforgettable to me.*

This is a faithful description of good storytelling: conversational, humorous, or grave according to the tale, with something of the storyteller's unique personality. There is a chance for more subtle characterizations and for an unconscious building up of suspense. Both teller and listener develop a keener

<sup>1</sup>Benjamin Franklin School, Cleveland, principal, Miss Aida Kanti; teacher, Miss Grace Salkett.

feeling for words. Telling "Clever Manka" to the oldest children in the elementary school plays upon their ability to anticipate the results of certain actions, builds up their wonder at whatever Manka will think up next, and, finally, leaves them amused and satisfied. Telling "Urashima Taro" is different. Here are a subtle and beautiful style, strange people and places, and an ending sad and enigmatic. Telling these stories to older children gives you more fun than you ever had from reading them. They are somehow your own creation when you tell them, as they can never be when you stand with book in hand.

#### Read the picture-stories; tell the folk tales

The younger the child, the more he needs the informal, intimate approach to literature that he gets when someone tells him a story. But even the youngest child should hear stories from books. All the so-called picture-stories should be read with the book. A picture-story, of course, is one told with pictures as an integral part of the text, like Marjorie Flack's *Angus* books, or Beatrix Potter's *Tale of Peter Rabbit* or Helen Bannerman's *Story of Little Black Sambo*. Such stories actually lose by being told without the accompanying illustrations. But except for these tales in which the pictures are as important as the text, stories for small children should be told, as intimately and comfortably as a mother tells the child stories at night when she puts him to bed. There is no excuse for reading "The Little Red Hen," "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff," or "The Three Little Pigs," since they are as easy to tell after two or three trials as Mother Goose verses are to say. As a matter of fact, they are so easy to learn that by about the third round the child is telling them with you. Learn four or five of them one year, and they will be with you for life. Learn a few more the next year, and soon you will have a storytelling repertoire that will surprise you and delight the children. Never will you

have to lug books to a picnic, because the stories will be in your head. Never will an unexpected wait for the school nurse or the promised tester find you searching wildly for a book to read to the children. You are equal to any emergency, and when your store of tales gives out, usually some of the children can take over.

Teachers of older children say, "Oh, well, that's all right for those little, short, repetitional tales which please the kindergarten or primary children, but stories for older children are long; teachers don't have time to learn them; surely they should be read aloud." The folk tales *are* long, but they are surprisingly easy to learn once you get used to them. However, rather than omit them because you feel it is impossible to sit down and learn to tell a complex and lengthy story as it deserves to be told, tell only one or two and read the others. Far, far better to read a story beautifully than to tell it poorly. But try learning to tell, say, just two stories a year and reading the others. Then learn two more the next year. Your children will be changing while your repertoire is growing, and the old stories will be new to each oncoming group. Meanwhile, your powers of storytelling will be kept alive and will improve steadily.

#### Read stories calling for exact words of author

Stories which you never tell but always read from the book are those which depend upon the exact words of the author for their charm and meaning. Rudyard Kipling's *Just So Stories* are good examples. No word of these should be altered; so telling them would mean memorization, which is never storytelling but something much more formal. Although separate episodes can be lifted for telling from *Alice in Wonderland* or *Wind in the Willows*, they should not be. Such stories should be read, because the style of the author ought not to be tampered with—no words can be altered without a loss. Probably even Hans Christian Andersen's re-

telling of folk tales should be read, because his matchless style is lost unless the story is memorized. Marie Shedlock, the famous English storyteller, always told the Andersen tales to perfection, but she memorized them as an actress memorizes her lines and then recreated them in telling with apparent spontaneity and captivating charm. She was an artist to her finger tips, but hers was the art of the platform, with five hundred or a

thousand in the audience, not the intimate art of the fireside, the cribside, the library, or the schoolroom with a few children close to the teller and the tale keyed in the low tone of friend to friend. For most of us, the rule still holds that a story which must be memorized becomes a recitation and a recitation is never storytelling. It is better always to read the tale that requires the exact words of the author.

## Personal equipment for storytelling

The successful storyteller must have two types of equipment for his art. First, he must possess those outward and visible evidences of fitness for the task—good voice, clear diction, adequate vocabulary, and pleasant appearance. Second, he must achieve a certain elusive inner and spiritual grace made up of complete sincerity, delight in his tale, self-forgetfulness, and a respect for his audience and for his storytelling art. The first equipment can be attained through patient practice. The second must grow from living and from loving both literature and people.

### Agreeable voice

An agreeable voice and clear, pure diction are perhaps the first requisites for the storyteller to consider. Needless to say, there should not be a special voice reserved for storytelling. You have sometimes heard the saccharine voice that talks down to the "Dee-ah lit-tel chil-dren." These unctuous tones are heard all too often over the radio—more often from men than from women. You should take stock of your own vocal equipment. Ask others to evaluate your voice honestly. Record it if possible, so that you can listen to it yourself. If your voice is nasal, harsh, or monotonous, try to improve it for everyday use to the point where it is agreeable and lovely for special use. Women tend to pitch their voices higher and shriller than they should. Try your speaking voice at the piano and see where it falls in relation to middle C. Most of us can profitably pitch

our everyday speaking voices a key or so lower than we have been doing, and both we and our children will be more peaceful as a result. Go to the theater or turn on the radio, and deliberately listen to and compare voices. Be critical of the oversweet voices of some radio personalities, both male and female. Try to discover what makes the voices of Katharine Cornell, Helen Hayes, Sir Lawrence Olivier, Richard Burton, Maurice Evans, and Dylan Thomas so moving and satisfying. Put on Lynn Fontanne's recording of "The White Cliffs of Dover" and notice the range and variety in that high, sweet voice. Lessons with an expert in voice placement and production will help you, but by cultivating a listening ear you can do much for yourself.

A good voice is invariably supported by deep and controlled breathing. Breath must come from down in the diaphragm, not from the upper chest. Read aloud sustained passages from the Psalms or from Shakespeare. Put on Maurice Evans' recording of the lines from *Richard II* and read them with him. You can then tell when you run out of breath and he does not. Breathe deeper, and not only will you be able to sustain those long sonorous passages, but your voice will grow in richness and resonance. Shallow breathing makes thin, tired voices, which are apt to become shrill and sharp. Deep controlled breathing gives to the voice both support and increased range and color.

When you can read Shakespeare's Sonnet XXIX and phrase it correctly without run-

ning out of breath, then you have good breath control, which will make your voice grow in depth and power as you use it. Notice that this sonnet has only the final period and only two semicolons to break the sequential phrases. Try lines 2, 3, and 4 on one breath, and, of course, lines 11 and 12.

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,  
I all alone beweep my outcast state,  
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,  
And look upon myself and curse my fate,  
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,  
Featured like him, like him with friends poss-  
sess'd,

Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,  
With what I most enjoy contented least;  
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,  
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,  
Like to the lark at break of day arising  
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's  
gate;

For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth  
brings  
That then I scorn to change my state with  
kings.

Now, after having huffed and puffed self-consciously as you worked for breath control, read the sonnet for enjoyment.

Clear articulation of words is as essential as an agreeable voice. Of course, nothing is worse than an artificial, overprecise enunciation, except perhaps an attempt to imitate the speech of another district that is quite foreign to us. If we are New England, Southern, Midwestern, or Western, let's not try for Oxford English or any other accent unnatural to us. Instead, let's eradicate the impurities of our own particular region (every region has them), and try to speak the purest, most vigorous pattern of English that obtains in our section of the country. Storytelling is ruined if it sounds artificial or pretentious, for it is the homiest of all the arts.

### Good diction

Storytelling is an art that requires disciplines of many kinds, and one of these is the choice of words. No storyteller can go far with a

meager vocabulary; moreover, she must develop a sensitivity to words, so that she cannot possibly tell an Irish tale with the same vocabulary and cadence she uses for a Norwegian story. Read the story aloud before you begin to learn it until you get the feel and flavor of its peculiar vocabulary and word patterns. While exact memorizing is usually the wrong approach to the folk tale, the other extreme is much worse—a slipshod telling, a careless use of words. Such colloquialisms and modernisms as "Boots got real mad," or "the princess looked perfectly lovely," or "'O.K.," said the lad," can ruin the mood and magic of a tale. Words must be chosen with a sensitive perception of the individual style of each tale. The dreamlike romance of "Sadko" calls for a very different choice of words from the rural story of "Gudbrand on the Hill-side." Voice, diction, and vocabulary demand the training of your ear. Listen to yourself—to your voice, your speech, and, above all, to the appropriate words for your story.

### Making vocabulary clear

A second aspect of the word problem is the effect the peculiar language of the folk tales has upon children. For instance, consider words like "pate," "goody," "lassie," "mare," "foal," "tapers," "minstrels," "spindle," and dozens of others. As this text has already suggested, one of the easiest ways to explain these baffling words to young listeners is just to paraphrase them casually as you tell the story: "Just then he met a lassie—a young girl. 'Good day, lassie,' said he"—and the word is established. A teacher once told the story of "Clever Manka" to a group of college students, and, when she had finished and they had all commented pleasantly on the story, she asked them what it meant when it said, "the mare foaled in the market place." Only one girl in the class knew, although an important point in the story turns on that phrase. Why should the students have understood it? They were city girls and it is a rural phrase. Children would be even more

confused by such language. In telling it to children, paraphrase by all means: "the mare foaled in the market place—gave birth to a little colt or foal." Or if you wish, since it relates to an important episode in the tale, clear it up before telling the story. Since the tale is for older children, the latter procedure is probably better. Write the words on the board and discuss the power of newborn colts or foals to get on their feet and even walk a little way. Explain that the foal in this story probably tottered over to a nearby wagon and lay down. There is no reason why children should not hear a much wider range of words than they are going to use, but there is every reason for helping them to understand the words as they hear them, either by paraphrasing them or by systematically explaining them before or after the storytelling.

### Appearance

Your particular style of beauty or plainness is of no consequence to successful storytelling, but certain other elements of appearance are. Whether you sit or stand, you must be relaxed and easy. If you have to stand to tell your stories, then practice them standing until you are at ease and so can enjoy yourself. If you sit with your children grouped comfortably close to you, then practice telling your story sitting down until you are used to telling stories in that position. For most of us, it is safest to practice both ways, so that we can forget ourselves in either position and be ready for any storytelling situation in which we may find ourselves. Forgetting ourselves does not mean that we can afford either to sit or to stand sloppily. Practice in front of a mirror for a little while until you know what a comfortable good posture looks like; then hold it. Either sitting or standing, you should keep your hands free of handkerchiefs or pencils or other impedimenta, free for the occasional gesture most people make now and then. Your clothes should be the kind your audience forgets the moment the tale begins; so don't wear a hat. Some-

how feminine hats are insistent things that cannot be forgotten; and they are completely foreign to the timeless and homey quality of the folk tales.

### Living the story

The important elements of your appearance come from within. These are your genuine, unaffected smile of enjoyment, the twinkle in your eye, the sudden gravity, the warning frown—in short, those slight but unmistakable responses to the changing mood or matter of the tale. The elaborate pantomime and large dramatic gestures of the stage have no place in storytelling. You need only the subtle expressions of the face and eyes, responding even as the voice responds to the import of the story. Mousy girls are often illumined with the zest and fun of a great story, timid girls are often lifted and inspired by a hero tale until they actually seem to grow in stature and impressiveness. This comes from within. This comes from living and loving your story until you are a flexible instrument for its full and best expression. It is not something to be learned by standing in front of a mirror and twinkling your eyes at the right moment—heaven forbid! It means something far more difficult.

First, you must genuinely desire to tell your story. You must fall in love with the content or style or both. Never try to tell a story which barely interests you. Ruth Sawyer put this positively in *The Way of the Storyteller*, when she said that she was "always trying out with others something that had moved me deeply; always finding out that what had been for me a spiritual feast usually fed others."

Of course, if you have not the emotional capacity to be deeply moved by these stories, then do not try to tell them, for there must be warmth and a loving appreciation in every word of a story if it is to touch an audience. To hear Mrs. Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen tell "Gudbrand on the Hill-side" was to know how she loved that tender old wife and how she relished the complete faith of



that absurd and canny old man. She was sincerely entertained and touched by the pair, and her feeling moved her audience.

To love a story in this way means that the teller has not only learned the story mechanically and lived with it for some time but has *learned it with her heart*, brooding over it and fussing with the phraseology until words and voice convey precisely what she feels. She does not rattle through it merely to get the words but re-creates it imaginatively. She tells it slowly and thoughtfully to the darkness after she has gone to bed or she thinks it through, scene by scene, on the streetcar until finally it is her story. Such solitary telling is a process of disciplining herself until she can give an honest interpretation of the way the story makes her feel.

### Sharing the story

Telling a story to an audience, however large or small, requires another quality which is difficult to name. Perhaps friendliness is as good a word for it as any other—a reaching out to people, a desire to share with them something that you enjoy.

Once when I was still very new at storytelling, I was asked to give a Christmas Eve program in a detention home for girls. When I saw the girls marching in, I was suddenly in a panic. Most of them were there for the worst possible reasons, and it was as sad

a group as you could well imagine. Some of them were far too young to look as hard as they did; some were making a pitiful show of bravado and sophistication, but the majority of them looked out of dull eyes with a kind of hopeless apathy. How could these girls be reached by stories about fairies and wee red caps, or about a goldfish that talked back? Probably my beginning was as weak as possible, because I was beset by doubts. Then "Peter the Goldfish" began to absorb my entire attention, as he always does, and I forgot the peculiar quality of these girls; they were just girls to enjoy what I enjoyed. Suddenly one of them chuckled spontaneously, and we were friends sharing a common joke. After that there was no more panic for the teller. We shared the humor and charm of both Peter and "The Voyage of the Wee Red Cap" (blessings on Ruth Sawyer for that inimitable tale!). We sang some carols together, and I ended with the second chapter of St. Luke, read quietly, as I read it at home. The room was still, and the girls were at ease. Afterward they came up to shake hands, and one of them said simply, "You done real good. I hope you come again."

This is what storytelling will help you do—to reach out to people impersonally but with the friendliness that comes from pleasures shared. It is one of the most heart-warming experiences in the world.

### Learning and telling a story

Probably no one learns and re-creates stories in quite the way anyone else does; but visualizing characters and scenes has always helped me not only to learn a story but to tell it. In "The Pancake," I see a snug kitchen with a mother standing close to the stove, her seven hungry children crowding much too near her to watch that fat sizzling pancake. An old grandfather is sitting over in the corner smoking his pipe. Through the open door—it must be open because the pancake rolled through it—I see a country road winding over the hills and across the

country and clear out of sight. I see the characters, too, some in more detail than others, depending upon how dramatic their words or their rôles are in the tale. Seeing them undoubtedly helps in characterizing them; so if you see the sneering faces of Cinderella's sisters, undoubtedly something of the sneer gets into your interpretation of their words and behavior. Not that you do actually sneer, of course—that is stage business, not storytelling—but still a sneerful suggestion undoubtedly creeps in.

Obviously, if you are going to tell a story

you must know it thoroughly. This involves overlearning to such a degree that not only is forgetting impossible, but you can stand aside and play with the interpretation of your story because you have no concern for the mechanics of recall. Some people feel that memorizing is the only solution while others consider memorizing a dangerous approach to the folk tales, for two reasons. First, these naive tales have not the formal perfection of the literary story; they were always kept fluid and personal by the old tellers. Ruth Sawyer, in *The Way of the Storyteller*, pays a tribute to the storytelling of her Irish nurse, who was proud of her art and used it with great dignity. She would close a story with the saying, "Take it, and may the next one who tells it better it." This is exactly what happens. A young student will tell one of the tales which we have loved and told and, although she follows the same text, the story becomes as uniquely hers as if no one had ever told it before. This is the way it always has been and always will be.

Another reason why exact memorizing is dangerous is that the forgetting of a single phrase or a connecting sentence will throw the teller completely off, so that she has to stop or start over or make an awkward pause while she racks her brain for the lost words. This of course spoils a story which if it is thoroughly learned but not memorized will remain in your memory for years. Sometimes when I am going to tell a story which perhaps I have not told for several years, I will read it over only once to recall it, or if the manuscript is not handy I will start in solitude, bringing it back to the threshold of consciousness and speech. It may come haltingly in spots, but with one or two retellings it is as smooth and sure as it ever was. How is it done?

Psychologists say that the greatest carry-over in learning and the least loss through forgetting are insured by practicing in the same way in which you are going to use your material. Since storytelling is oral, learn your story orally, in the sitting or standing position you expect to employ, and with an

imaginary audience around you. Of course you read your tale once or twice silently until you are thoroughly familiar with its sequential action, its mood, its areas of suspense, and its climax. You may then read it aloud once, if you wish to hear it, listening especially for its peculiar cadences, its folk flavor. Then begin telling it aloud, with the book at hand to refer to when you forget. It will be heavy going at first, with more rough spots than smooth, but go through the tale as a whole once or twice. Then polish the beginning and the end until they are easy and sure. Dialogue is the most difficult and the most fun. The dialogue sections you must lift out and work at until you make the right connections and they go naturally and spontaneously. Every time you single out a special section for practice, go back and tell the whole story again until it begins to come to life as a whole, and to sound not only like the story but like you.

Perhaps my experience will illustrate the difference between memorizing and the process just described. In telling "The Pancake," I have no idea when and to whom the pancake says, "How do you do," or "As well as I may," or "Good day to you," or "The same to you." The pancake and the characters he encounters exchange all these various forms of greetings and responses. These I know in general and apply as I wish. As a matter of fact, after years of telling, my own use of them seems to follow a definite pattern that is mine, never the modern "Hi-yah," or the stately "God rest you, stranger" of some other tale. My version is both the pattern of the "Pancake" and my own personal pattern. It is learned, but not memorized. Does this make the distinction any clearer?

The other spots in the story which you lift out for special practice are those which stir the emotions. Listen to yourself. If you are waxing overemotional, tone down; or if you muffle the climax, go back and heighten the suspense that leads up to it, bringing out the climax on a fine crescendo. The great virtue of working orally is that you can hear

your weak spots and strengthen them. You can hear where the story becomes a little dull or slow, where your dialogue halts or the vocabulary is obscure for the particular group you have in mind. In short, oral practice for oral presentation is the safest, the quickest, and the most effective method of learning, whether you memorize your material or not.

### The beginnings and endings

The beginnings and endings of your stories should be polished until they are smooth and sure. The beginning requires special care because it establishes the mood of your tale. You announce your story informally in any of a dozen ways: "Today we are going to hear about our old friends, 'The Three Billy-Goats Gruff.'" "I've a new story for you today, and it's called 'The Fox and His Travels.'" "You have all heard stories about 'Jack the Giant Killer,' but do you know there was one girl who got the best of a powerful giant? Our story is about her, and her name was 'Molly Whuppie.'"

Then, having announced your story, pause a moment—not too long, not long enough to let the children start squirming again, just long enough for a deep, quiet breath—and then begin. The beginning of a nonsense tale is very different from the beginning of a romance, as you can hear when you read these lines aloud:

*Once on a time there was a man who had a goody who was so cross grained that there was no living with her. ("Goody Gains the Stream" from Tales from the Fjeld.)*

*Once, in the golden time, when an Irish king sat in every province and plenty covered the land, there lived in Connaught a grand old king with one daughter. She was as tall and slender as the reeds that grow by Lough Erne, and her face was the fairest in seven counties. ("The Princess and the Vagabone," from The Way of the Storyteller.)*

*There was once upon a time a Fisherman who lived with his wife in a pig-stye close by the sea, and every day he went out fishing; and*

*he fished, and he fished. ("The Fisherman and His Wife" from Grimm's Fairy Tales.)*

*As Chicken-Licken went one day to the wood, an acorn fell on her poor bald pate, and she thought the sky had fallen. ("Chicken-Licken," from Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales.)*

Here are the beginnings of a droll, a romance, a comic-tragedy, and a nursery tale. In your telling, you establish the right atmosphere for your whole story with these opening lines; you put your audience in the right mood and build up anticipation.

So with the endings you should leave your audience satisfied, with a sense of completion. Good stories have been spoiled by a weak, inconclusive telling of the end. It must come with conviction, whether it is nonsense, romance, poetic justice, or one of those surprise endings which are fun for everyone. The noisy grunt or inhalation with which you finish off "The Pancake" ought to make the children jump and then laugh. This is primitive humor but well worth practicing for its gratifying results. Very different are the surprise endings of "Clever Manka" and "Sadko," or the romantic conclusions of "The Princess and the Vagabone" and "East o' the Sun," or the poetic justice of "The Fisherman and His Wife." These satisfying conclusions are characteristic of the folk tales and should be enhanced by the way you tell them.

### Dramatizing the tales

The preceding discussion suggests the question of how far you should go in dramatizing these tales as you tell them and points, perhaps, to a limit beyond which too much is decidedly too much. Storytelling is essentially the art of the fireside, the campfire, the crib-side, and the classroom. It should be kept simple and informal, or else it goes over into the realm of the stage, where it does not belong. Yet the folk tales are dramatic and should be dramatically told in the restrained drama of everyday talk.

Young children are so motor-minded that they can't talk about a train without "choo-

choosing" and making the appropriate scuffing, shuttling motions of feet and arms. So in telling stories to them, you unconsciously use more gestures and more pantomime than you would ordinarily. It may not be necessary, but it seems entirely natural to roll the pancake out of the door with a big circular motion of the hand when you say "and rolled out of the door like a wheel," or to suggest the length of the troll's nose with hand to nose and then hand extended full arm's length away as you say, "and a nose as long as a poker." Most nursery-school and kindergarten teachers and mothers of young children do something of the sort. If such gestures are not overdone, they are natural and legitimate. But they probably should diminish to

the vanishing point with older children. With them, any overdramatization turns storytelling into elocutionary absurdity. "The lassie made a low bow" is most decidedly not accompanied by such a bow. Nevertheless, the lassie's fear or humility is conveyed by the voice, which speaks the words gravely or humbly. Or suppose there was mockery in that bow; so, too, the voice can suggest the lassie's frame of mind in the speaking of those same words. Try it. In short, you never dramatize literally; you suggest ever so simply but unmistakably the dramatic element in the narrative. The moment you forget this restraint so essential to the integrity of a story, something artificial and stagy comes in, and the art of storytelling is destroyed.

### Three storytellers with contrasting style

Perhaps some of these points about storytelling can be illustrated by sketching briefly the techniques of three distinguished storytellers: the English Marie Shedlock, the American Ruth Sawyer, and the Norwegian Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen. These three women were as unlike as possible in personality, in manner of telling their stories, and even in the type of tales they told, but they did have certain characteristics in common. All three had a deep love for the old stories and presented them with an evident sincerity and enjoyment. And all three were sensitive to words and used them with precision and telling effect. Words and voices were their media for reaching an audience, and they used them beautifully; but here their differences began. Miss Sawyer's voice is warm and rich; Miss Shedlock's was deep and resonant in the tradition of the stage; Mrs. Thomsen's was curiously light, sweet, and in a minor key. Their art was as individual as their voices.

#### Marie Shedlock

Marie Shedlock was a tiny woman used to appearing before enormous audiences. As a result she used the large gestures of the stage and dramatized her material to a greater ex-

tent than would be necessary by the fireside or in a schoolroom. If the story called for a curtsy, she curtsied. She also memorized her stories, probably because she was preëminent as an interpreter of the stories of Hans Christian Andersen, whose words should not be tampered with. She was of the stage or platform rather than the home or schoolroom and hers was a literary rather than a folk art. Nevertheless, it was great storytelling, rich in characterizations, full of subtly suggested implications, and sparkling with infectious gaiety. Her eyes shone, her voice was clear and rich, and her flawless diction fell on the ears like music. Marie Shedlock will be remembered for her ebullient humor, her disciplined art of narration, her sense of the dramatic, and her unaffected delight in telling a good story. These qualities won her audiences old and young.<sup>1</sup>

#### Ruth Sawyer

Ruth Sawyer is known not only as a collector and editor of folk tales but as a storyteller as well. People comment on her warm friendliness, which reaches out to an audience imme-

<sup>1</sup>*Horn Book*, May 1934, is devoted to the art of Marie Shedlock.

diately. There is no one else who can relate Irish stories as she does, and there is perhaps no other storyteller with so wide a range of tales from many lands, representing many types and moods. If she is sometimes a bit sentimental, she has also a sense of fun and quick flashes of wit. While her stories are folk tales, collected from the lips of native storytellers, Miss Sawyer tells them in literary form that is a long way from the stark simplicity of a Norwegian folk tale. Perhaps this is because she has listened to the Irish storytellers, who use language richly and melodiously, making a more frequent use of the beautifully cadenced line than any others. Her stories make music both on the printed page and when she tells them. Only a fine storyteller with an unerring sense of words, mood, and the music of narration could have produced that Christmas masterpiece, "The Voyage of the Wee Red Cap." It is characteristic of her art both in editing and telling stories.

### **Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen**

Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen has given us the greatest expression of the folk art of storytelling that this generation has known. Neither here-and-now fashions in children's literature nor Hollywood's cult of distorting authentic literature has ever touched the purity of her art. Recordings of her storytelling have been made for the Library of Congress, and commercial recordings are available too. Mrs. Thomsen has trained innumerable librarians and teachers in the meticulous disciplines of storytelling, and these recordings of hers should extend her influence still further.<sup>1</sup>

Two forces in her childhood help to explain her unique art. She was Norwegian born, the daughter of the distinguished actress who created the rôles of Ibsen's heroines as each of his plays was written and produced. We can imagine the child of that mother, highly intelligent and sensitive to beauty,

growing up in an atmosphere where devotion to the integrity of the spoken word was taken for granted. Storytelling was also a part of each day's experience, so that the child, Gudrun, stored away in her heart an abiding love for the sagas and the homely tales of her country. This love she expressed in a lifetime of storytelling.

Mrs. Thomsen was small and plain with the beautiful plainness of fine silver. Her brow was high and serene, her features delicate and mobile, and her eyes Northern blue, clear, and honest. She stood quietly with rarely a gesture; she spoke slowly and gravely and her voice captured you immediately. It was a light voice—with no heavy resonance, no ringing tones, but a rare sweetness. Here was a tempered instrument which had been used in the service of beauty and spoke to the spirit even more effectively than the carefully chosen words. She had a quiet sense of humor, which expressed itself subtly in just a hint of a smile, a sudden droll turn of phrase. She developed the drama of her tales with astonishing effectiveness, considering her restraint. She used no exaggerated inflections and few gestures. It was the quality of the voice, the minor note of fear or loneliness, the crescendo of happiness or exultation, and the steady sustained tone of courage which told the story. Whether it was a lassie searching for her lost love or a Pancake growing cockier and cockier or a Sigurd winning his sword, the voice laid its spell on every audience.

Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen was the quietest of all the storytellers, and the least humorous. Sometimes in telling a saga she seemed almost austere, and her stories were apt to fall continuously into a minor key. Her art was the essence of dramatic simplicity—no embellishments, no exaggeration, but a complete integrity of words and spirit, and all so quiet, so still that you could hear the heart speaking.

These three great storytellers—Marie Shedlock, Ruth Sawyer, Gudrun Thorne-Thomsen—had different gifts and different styles but an equal devotion to their art. They are proof that different personalities will succeed

<sup>1</sup>Five records can be obtained through the American Library Association, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago 11.

with different methods—in storytelling as well as in other activities. Marie Shedlock, in the tradition of the stage rather than the fireside, had a dramatic quality and an unaffected gaiety that no child could resist. Ruth Sawyer gives a literary, ornamented touch to folk tales that makes them sheer poetry and carries the children to new appreciation of the

## Reading aloud

It may seem easier to read aloud than to tell a story, but reading and telling require a similar discipline. Never read or tell a story you genuinely dislike, for without sincerity and a sense of shared enjoyment the story will never come to life. Except for those simplest little picture-*tales* for the youngest, you had better read aloud for yourself beforehand any story you are going to read to the children. The requisites for storytelling—voice, diction, dramatic simplicity—are needed for reading aloud. Moreover, now that you have a book between you and your audience, you will find it easier to lose the children's attention and interest. To avoid this, you must know your text so well that you can read to the children a good part of the time, looking over your text directly at them. This is not hard to do if you have gone over the story ahead of time. If you are in a hurry (and who isn't?), skim the story in advance, reading aloud enough to get the feel of how it goes, where the suspense comes, what are the moods to be established, and how it ends; or, if it is a whole book, where you will conclude that day's reading. Even ten minutes' preparation will repay you many times when you stand before the class, book in hand. A teacher who reads well can illumine an otherwise dull day for children. A poor reader is just another pain for them to endure and to forgive if they can.

Most grown-ups can still recall the books read to them years ago by their parents or teachers. A father once admitted that he had even been enthralled with *Little Women* when it was read to his class. These adult

beauty of words. Mrs. Thomsen might seem overserious for children, but her simplicity and her quietness were right, both for the folk tales she told and for her listeners. Your own storytelling will take on still a different pattern. Only two specific qualities you must share with these three—you must be sincere and you must enjoy telling stories.

reminiscences lead to a final suggestion: choose for storytelling or reading aloud only distinguished stories and poetry. Children will read plenty of trash on their own, but it won't hurt them if they are immunized against mediocrity by exposure to enough first-rate literature. To read second-rate material aloud with all your skill is to give it a disproportionate importance, but to give this emphasis to a fine story is to make it important and memorable to children. Upon the old magic, the folk tales, you will bestow the special honor of storytelling. The new magic, the modern fanciful tales—these you may read aloud. But whether you read or tell stories, enjoy them yourself and share your enjoyment unaffectedly with the children.

Try rereading these folk tales. They will move you sometimes to laughter and sometimes to tender pity. They will give you a better understanding of other people and yourself also. When you have finished, you will find that you have grown accustomed to looking at life with the eyes of a poet, searching for the spirit behind the rags or behind the fine clothes, for the selfishness or the nobility that makes the man. You will find that your ears have grown accustomed to the language of poets speaking in prose. You can never forget the measured cadence of these tales, the words dancing or stepping gravely to the mood. All the rest of your life you will unconsciously measure other prose and other stories by the fairy tales.

The folk tales with their exciting action, rich imaginative qualities, and their orderly

and exact form satisfy some of the child's basic needs. They stir and reassure him. They carry him completely out of himself and give him new insight about himself, and about other people, too. They have been kept alive by oral tradition and are still, even in this day of books, more effective for telling than for reading. The multiplicity of folk-tale collections does not mean that we should use more of them. Most teachers are probably using them less than they once did because other types of fiction for children have improved in quality. But we should know that there are now available many national collections of these old tales, and we should select from

them a moderate number of suitable variety. Folk tales, delightful as they are, should be used in balanced proportion to realistic stories and informational reading. They are fantasy, and too much fantasy can make Jack a confused boy, a runaway from reality. But in moments of discouragement, let's be grateful for the reassuring message of these old tales. These stories say to the child, "Don't be too depressed about brute force and wickedness, because you will live to see them overthrown. Kindness and courage work their own magic in this world. Just remember the glass slipper in your pocket. It is your talisman of the triumph of virtue."

Illustration by Hans Fischer for  
*The Traveling Musicians* by Grimm,  
 Harcourt, Brace, 1956  
 (original in color,  
 book 8¼ x 12)

*Wealth and security for the  
 homeless musicians at last!  
 Only the nocturnal cat lies  
 awake in her handsome new  
 bed. The others snooze  
 luxuriously. Hans Fischer, with  
 freely sketched pen lines filled  
 in with bright colors, tells the  
 story in details that reduce  
 words to second place. Even the  
 youngest can soon "read" his  
 stories from the illustrations.*





Illustration from Boris Artzybasheff's  
Aesop's Fables, Viking, 1945 (book 6 x 9¼)

*Although he is as stylized as an Oriental rug, this leopard's pride is written all over his face. Note how Artzybasheff, a master of intricate design, repeats curved lines throughout the picture.*

Fables, myths, and epics are also a part of the great stream of folklore. While they are not generally so popular with children as the fairy tales, they have made an equally important contribution to our literary heritage. The fables have colored our attitudes toward moral and ethical problems. The myths and the epics have become a part of our everyday symbols and speech. All these three types of literature, while fundamentally different, have one characteristic in common: they have a strongly marked moral flavor.

### Moral tales: fables, parables, proverbs

Fables are brief narratives which attempt to make abstract ideas of good or bad, wise or foolish behavior concrete and striking enough to be understood and remembered. Whether the characters are crows or men, they remain coldly impersonal and engage in a single significant act which teaches a moral lesson. These are the essential elements of the true fable. Here is an example of the simplest type:

#### THE CROW AND THE PITCHER

A thirsty Crow found a Pitcher with some water in it, but so little was there that, try as she might, she could not reach it with her beak,



and it seemed as though she would die of thirst within sight of the remedy. At last she hit upon a clever plan. She began dropping pebbles into the Pitcher, and with each pebble the water rose a little higher until at last it reached the brim, and the knowing bird was enabled to quench her thirst.

"Necessity is the mother of invention."<sup>1</sup>

The chief actor in most fables is an animal or inanimate object which behaves like a human being and has one dominant trait. G. K. Chesterton insists that there can be no good fables with human beings in them, and it is true that most fables are not concerned with people. Yet there are a substantial number of fables which tell about human beings and still retain their fable quality. Remember "The Boy Who Cried Wolf," and

#### THE MILKMAID AND HER PAIL

A farmer's daughter had been out to milk the cows, and was returning to the dairy carrying her pail of milk upon her head. As she walked along, she fell a-musing after this fashion: "The milk in this pail will provide me with cream, which I will make into butter and take to market to sell. With the money I will buy a number of eggs, and these, when hatched, will produce chickens, and by and by I shall have quite a large poultry-yard. Then I shall sell some of my fowls, and with the money which they will bring in I will buy myself a new gown, which I shall wear when I go to the fair; and all the young fellows will admire it, and come and make love to me, but I shall toss my head and have nothing to say to them." Forgetting all about the pail, and suiting the action to the word, she tossed her head. Down went the pail, all the milk was spilled and all her fine castles in the air vanished in a moment!

"Do not count your chickens before they are hatched."<sup>2</sup>

Here again is a single episode pointing to a moral, as briefly and impersonally related as "The Crow and the Pitcher." It is a true fable.

Fables have a teasing likeness to proverbs and parables. All three embody universal

truths in brief, striking form; and all three are highly intellectual exercises, as exact as an equation. Of the three, the *proverb* is the most highly condensed commentary on human folly or wisdom. It tells no story but presents a bit of wisdom succinctly and sometimes wittily:

A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.<sup>3</sup>

The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion.<sup>4</sup>

He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it.<sup>5</sup>

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.<sup>6</sup>

Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.<sup>7</sup>

Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than an house full of feasting with strife.<sup>8</sup>

He that diligently seeketh good procureth favour: but he that seeketh mischief, it shall come unto him.<sup>9</sup>

Perhaps the fable grew out of the proverb, to dramatize its pithy wisdom in story form.

The *parable* is like the fable in that it tells a brief story from which a moral or spiritual truth may be inferred. But its characters, unlike the personified animals or objects of most fables, are often human beings, like the Wise and Foolish Virgins, or the Prodigal Son, or the Good Samaritan. If the story is told in terms of animals or objects, they are never personified but remain strictly themselves. That is, the seed that falls upon rocky ground has nothing to say for itself, and the house that was built upon sand goes down in the flood strictly a house. The parables use people or things as object lessons, and the matchless parables of Jesus point out and amplify the moral.

There are obvious differences among the

<sup>1</sup>Proverbs 15:1.

<sup>2</sup>Proverbs 28:1.

<sup>3</sup>Ecclesiastes 10:8.

<sup>4</sup>Proverbs 16:32.

<sup>5</sup>Proverbs 27:1.

<sup>6</sup>Proverbs 17:1.

<sup>7</sup>Proverbs 11:27.

<sup>1</sup>Aesop's Fables, translated by V. S. Vernon Jones, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

stories discussed in the following pages under *Fable collections*. Some are typical fables, some are parables, others resemble folk tales,

and many contain maxims or proverbs. All of them, however, embody moral or spiritual wisdom.

## Fable collections from various sources

If you say "fables" to an English-speaking child, he thinks at once of *Aesop's Fables*, the source of the two stories quoted on pages 282-283. To a French child, La Fontaine and "fables" are inseparably associated, and so it is in the Orient with *The Panchatantra*, *The Fables of Bidpai*, or the *Jatakas*. These major collections of fables, while resembling each other, show also striking differences.

### Aesop

Planudes, a fourteenth-century monk, prefixed a story of Aesop's life to a book of fables, supposedly those of Aesop. Some modern scholars not only doubt the authenticity of this account, but they even doubt whether Aesop really existed. G. K. Chesterton suggests that he may be as completely a fictitious character as that other slave, Uncle Remus, who also told beast tales. Aesop is said to have lived between 620 and 560 B.C. and is thought to have been a Samian slave. Because free speech under the Tyrants was risky business, Aesop is supposed to have used the fables for political purposes, protecting himself and veiling his opinions behind the innuendoes of these little stories. Legend has it that he was deformed and that he was hurled off a cliff, whether for his deformity or for his politics it is not known. All we know is that the picturesque legends about Aesop have persisted. Today we like to think of the ugly, intelligent slave telling his apparently simple tales about "The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing" or "The Frogs Desiring a King" as subtle parodies on the ways of tyrants and simple men.

Translated into Latin in the first and third centuries, the Aesop fables became the textbooks of the medieval schools. In Latin they found their way into England, France, and Germany, were translated into several lan-

guages, and were among the first books to be printed by Caxton when he started his famous press in England. Evidently there was infiltration from other sources. Joseph Jacobs said he could mention at least seven hundred fables ascribed to Aesop, although the first known collection of them made by Demetrius of Phalerum, about 320 B.C., contained only about two hundred. Since India, like Greece, had long used the beast tale for teaching purposes, undoubtedly some of the Indian fables had gravitated, in the course of time, to the Aesop collection. From whatever source they came, once included in Aesop they assumed the Aesop form, which is now regarded as the pure fable type. It is a brief story with inanimate objects or animals most frequently serving as the leading characters, and with the single action of the narrative pointing to an obvious moral lesson.

### The Panchatantra

*The Panchatantra*, meaning "five books," was composed in Kashmir about 200 B.C.,<sup>1</sup> and is the oldest known collection of Indian fables. *The Hitopadesa*, or Book of Good Counsel, is considered only another version of *The Panchatantra*,<sup>2</sup> and still another is called *The Fables of Bidpai*. These collections were translated into Persian, Arabic, Latin, and many other languages. In the Latin version the tales became popular throughout medieval Europe.

After the extreme condensation of Aesop, the stories of *The Panchatantra* seem long and involved. They comprise a textbook on "the wise conduct of life," and are intricate stories-within-stories, interrupted with philosophical verses so numerous that the thread of the story is almost forgotten. Some of these

<sup>1</sup>*The Panchatantra*, translated by Arthur Ryder, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>*The Fables of India* by Joseph Gaez, p. 53.

A pleasant page to catch the child's eye! The lion and the mouse are a sufficiently incompatible pair to arouse an interest which their conversational pose heightens. The decorative rope frames the picture and ties title, picture, and text neatly together.

poems are sixteen or twenty verses long, but the quatrain is the more usual type.

A friend in need is a friend indeed,  
Although of different caste;  
The whole world is your eager friend  
So long as riches last.

When arrows pierce or axes wound  
A tree, it grows together sound;  
From cruel, ugly speech you feel  
A wound that time will never heal.

Make friends, make friends, however strong  
Or weak they be;  
Recall the captive elephants  
That mice set free.<sup>1</sup>

Both human beings and animals take leading parts in these fables, so that in content as well as form they seem more like folk tales than fables. On the whole, *The Pancbatantra* is for adults rather than children, but some thirty-four of the best of these stories are well illustrated by E. Boyd Smith in *The Tortoise and the Geese and Other Fables of Bidpai*. This is a book children enjoy.

### The Jatakas

Another ancient collection of Indian fables is the group called the *Jatakas*. The time of their origin is not definitely known. They were in existence in the fifth century A.D., but carvings illustrating Jataka stories have been found which were made as early as the second or third centuries B.C. In modern India, crowds of attentive people still listen to these old tales.

*Jatakas* is a Buddhist name for stories concerning the rebirths of Gautama Buddha,

<sup>1</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 5, 322, 273.



who according to tradition was reincarnated many times in the forms of different animals until he became at last Buddha, the Enlightened One. These beast stories, then, are really about a man living briefly as an animal, consorting with other animals, and deriving from these experiences certain ethical lessons.

Joseph Gaer tells us that there are two or three thousand of these stories. Generally the introduction and body of the tale are in prose, but the conclusions are often verses. Comparatively few of them are suitable for children and then only with considerable adaptation. Ellen C. Babbitt's two books of the *Jatakas* were made with children in mind, and so omit all reference to the Buddha. Joseph Gaer's versions, in *The Fables of India*, keep closer to the original form of the *Jatakas*, as you can see by comparing his tale of "The Talkative Tortoise" with Ellen C. Babbitt's:

#### THE TURTLE WHO COULDN'T STOP TALKING

A Turtle lived in a pond at the foot of a hill. Two young wild Geese, looking for food, saw the Turtle, and talked with him. The next day



AND THEY LAUGHED LOUD AND LONG

Illustration by E. Boyd Smith for *The Tortoise and the Geese and Other Fables of Bidpai* retold by Maude Barrows Dutton, Houghton Mifflin, 1936 (book 4¾ x 7½)

*In spite of the beautiful sweep of wings there is something irresistibly comic in these soaring creatures. Note how E. Boyd Smith by distorting a tail here, a neck there, has centered attention on the absurdly dangling tortoise.*

ness is that of yours?" when he let go, and fell dead at the feet of the children.

As the two Geese flew on, they heard the people say, when they came to see the poor Turtle, "That fellow could not keep his mouth shut. He had to talk, and so lost his life."

This is, of course, a true fable. Other Jatakas remind us of familiar parables from the Bible. Still others are like short folk tales with self-evident morals. Because the tales in Joseph Gaer's *The Fables of India* keep closer to the original form of the Jatakas, they are more suitable for children of ten or older, while Ellen C. Babbitt's *Jatakas* charm the younger children. All three books of these are delightfully illustrated in the spirit of the text.

### La Fontaine, 1621-1695

In the twelfth century, Marie de France introduced and popularized the fable in France. Others followed her lead, but Jean de La Fontaine, a contemporary of Charles Perrault, made the fable so completely and gracefully his own that the French coined a word for him, *le fablier*, the "fable-teller."

He was born in the lovely district of Chateau-Thierry in Champagne, but after his separation from his wife, who continued to live there with their son, La Fontaine settled in Paris under the protection of first one wealthy patron and then another. Of the amusing stories told of his absent-mindedness, the best one concerns his meeting with his own son. He exclaimed to the friend who identified the boy, "Ah, yes, I thought I had seen him somewhere!" But the personal leg-

the Geese came again to visit the Turtle and they became very well acquainted. Soon they were great friends.

"Friend Turtle," the Geese said one day, "we have a beautiful home far away. We are going to fly back to it to-morrow. It will be a long but pleasant journey. Will you go with us?"

"How could I? I have no wings," said the Turtle.

"Oh, we will take you, if only you can keep your mouth shut, and say not a word to anybody," they said.

"I can do that," said the Turtle. "Do take me with you. I will do exactly as you wish."

So the next day the Geese brought a stick and they held the ends of it. "Now take the middle of this in your mouth, and don't say a word until we reach home," they said.

The Geese then sprang into the air, with the Turtle between them, holding fast to the stick.

The village children saw the two Geese flying along with the Turtle and cried out: "Oh, see the Turtle up in the air! Look at the Geese carrying a Turtle by a stick. Did you ever see anything more ridiculous in your life?"

The Turtle looked down and began to say, "Well, and if my friends carry me, what busi-

end of the man is insignificant compared to the fame of his fables.

La Fontaine was a skilled poet and wrote his fables in graceful verses which are delightful to read and easy to memorize. Unfortunately, they lose some of their appeal when translated into English. It is a lucky child who can have them in French with the illustrations of Boutet de Monvel. There are charming bits of description in these fables which reveal the birds and little beasts and the forests and meadows of the beautiful Champagne countryside where La Fontaine grew up. The courtier and the man of the world show themselves in the shrewd appraisals of character and the worldly philosophy that permeate the *Fables*:

Now, as everyone knows, white paws do not grow on wolves.

My dear Mr. Crow, learn from this how every flatterer lives at the expense of anybody who

## Using fables with children

The highly intellectual quality of fables, proverbs, and parables is quite apparent when they are compared with the folk tales. Just because the fable happens to use characters that sound like those of the folk tales, and because large, colored illustrations usually play up this resemblance, they have often been given to small children for entertainment. Then we are surprised when the children don't warm up to them. But let's keep our definitions clearly in mind. All three of them—proverbs, parables, and fables—are attempts to make abstract ideas sufficiently striking or objective to be understood and remembered. Every one of them is an abstraction—a maxim, an adage, a brief sermon on morality—and, because of this, the least appealing of all story types with children.

If you try to compose an original fable yourself, you will discover at once what a mathematical procedure it is. Suppose you take "Pride goeth before a fall" and choose a rabbit for your leading character. Your rabbit cannot be little Peter Rabbit, own

will listen to him. This lesson is well worth the loss of a cheese to you.

But among all the fools the human kind excels. We have the eyes of a lynx for the faults of others and the eyes of moles for our own. We forgive ourselves much more easily than we do our neighbor.<sup>1</sup>

La Fontaine used for his sources the Latin versions of Aesop and *The Fables of Bidpai*, and the versions of his predecessor, Marie de France. In spite of the verse form and the characteristic bits of philosophy, these *Fables* of La Fontaine's are closer to the Aesop pattern than to the tales from India. They maintain the brevity, the predominant use of animal characters, and, above all, the single striking episode which points the moral. Reading them in French, you readily understand why the school children of France have for generations memorized them with delight and remembered them always.

brother to Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cotton-tail; but he will be an impersonal creature known as Proud Rabbit. Then your equation is merely: *Proud Rabbit* + X = *Pride goeth before a fall*. All you have to do is to devise a single episode for X in which the Proud Rabbit takes a well-deserved tumble. No one will care about his misfortune either, because you give Proud Rabbit no family to grieve for him, no personality of any complexity. He isn't a family man, kind to his wife and children, with just one slight weakness, his pride. No, this fable rabbit is all PRIDE and nothing else. Your heart never beats with sympathy for fable creatures. They remain impersonal, unemotional exemplifications of virtue or folly.

### With young children

These are some of the reasons why, in spite of the bright-colored pictures which adorn many an edition of Aesop or La Fontaine,

<sup>1</sup>*The Fables of La Fontaine*, translated by Margaret W. Brown, pp. 6, 8, and 19.

the fables should be used chiefly with the older children. To be sure, a few may be told to young children in anticipation of the whole books later on, but they should be the ones which have the most story appeal, or an obvious bit of humor: for instance, "The Lion and the Mouse," "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse," "The Hare and the Tortoise," and "The Fox and the Crow." Two or three such fables a year, slipped in among warmly appealing folk tales and modern realistic stories, are about as many abstractions as the primary mind cares to cope with.

### With older children

On the other hand, children ten, eleven, and twelve years old can read for themselves and enjoy a good collection of the Aesop fables. They like to tell a fable to the class, omitting the moral to see how closely the group can come to supplying it. This, by the way, is no mean intellectual feat but is one item often used in intelligence tests. Or try the project suggested on page 287: take a maxim or proverb (see those given on pp. 283 and 285) and try to evolve a fable. This is too hard for children to do individually but can be great fun for a whole class. Because the pithy maxims of Aesop and La Fontaine have passed into our language and our thinking, every child should have some

### Gods and men

The fables are simple, highly condensed lessons in morality. The myth is far more complicated. It attempts to explain—in complex symbolism—the vital outlines of existence:

(1) cosmic phenomena (e.g., how the earth and sky came to be separated); (2) peculiarities of natural history (e.g., why rain follows the cries or activities of certain birds); (3) the origins of human civilization (e.g., through the beneficent action of a culture hero like Prometheus); or (4) the origin of social or religious custom or the nature and history of objects of worship.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>William Reginald Halliday, "Folklore," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

experience with them—"What's bred in the bone will never come out of the flesh."

With a study of India, introduce the stories of *The Panchatantra* and *Jatakas* as told by Ellen C. Babbitt and Joseph Gaer. Their three books have stories that are worth using at any time, with or without a unit on Indian life. "Greedy and Speedy," "The Lion and the Wily Rabbit," "The Hermit and the Mouse," "The Merchant of Seri," "Grannie's Blackie," and "The Banyan Deer" are all entertaining tales.

With older children, the Jataka tales might lead to the discovery of fablelike qualities in some of our modern tales; for instance, *Andy and the Lion* by James Daugherty, *The Story of Ferdinand* by Munro Leaf, *Nothing at All* by Wanda Gág, and *A Hero by Mistake* by Anita Brenner. The last may remind the children of a popular song that carries the same moral: "Whenever I feel afraid, I whistle a happy tune." However, you had best be cautious about too many of these excursions into morals and double meanings. A few such experiments will go a long way with children. When literature becomes chiefly a medium of instruction, it is usually on its way to failing as good literature. Introduce a few fables now and then throughout childhood and pre-adolescence, but use vigorous, entertaining stories and poetry most of the time.

It also attempts to make more acceptable the painful realities of existence—danger, disease, misfortune, death to which man is subjected—by explaining them as part of a sacred order in the universe.

The "explanations" may seem irrational and inconsistent to the science-minded modern. This is because they are not scientific hypotheses but were created by and appeal to the imagination. The truth of the myth was unquestioned by primitive peoples because it was so closely associated with their sacred beliefs. For them, both nature and society were areas of reverent acceptance—not

of objective study, as they are in this age of science and social science.

### Evolution of myths

A number of writers have called attention to the various levels of myth development, their evolution from primitive to highly complex symbolic stories. These developmental stages are important to us because they throw light upon the various types of stories included in myths and help to explain their suitability, or lack of it, as story material for children.

The early part of this evolution is, of course, shrouded in the darkness of prehistoric times. Much research has been devoted to it, but the outlines are still only dimly understood. For one thing, the evolution of myth and religion differs from people to people. Suffice it to say that the Greeks, like many other peoples, passed through a primary stage in which they worshiped an impersonal force believed to pervade all aspects of the universe: sun, moon, crops, rivers. The early Greeks performed rites to propitiate these bodiless forces so that they would grant to the world fertility and life. Later these nature forces were personified in the myths.

Myths, then, did give body—both animal and human—to the mystic forces that early people felt in the universe. As religious ideas developed, the tendency was to give complex human form to these impersonal forces. These bright sky-dwellers were created in man's own image but surpassed him in beauty, wisdom, and power. All the warmth and glory of the sun was embodied in the Greek ideas of Apollo, all the terror of storms in their ideas of Zeus and his fearful thunderbolts. Not only are the myths the "earliest recorded utterances of men concerning the visible phenomena of the world into which they were born," but myths also express men's wonder, fear, and sense of the beauty and majesty of nature.

Imagining these supernatural beings in their own likeness, the people interpreted a flood to mean that the river god was angry with man and intended to punish him.

Drouths, earthquakes, good crops, and bad crops were all dependent on how man stood in the graces of these nature gods. These primitive beginnings of myth were polytheistic; that is, they developed many gods. G. K. Chesterton, speaking of the many Greek deities, commented that "the Greeks could not see trees for dryads."

Presently these beings developed relationships among each other, assumed certain powers, and suffered limitations of power. Thus in the Greek mythology the first gods were all brothers and sisters—Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Poseidon, Hades, and Zeus. Because Zeus saved them from destruction, he was chosen the supreme ruler, the sky god, while Poseidon ruled the waters and Hades, dwelling below the earth, ruled the dominion of the dead. From their matings, their children, and the powers and limitations of each of these three powerful brothers arose endless squabbles that bear a melancholy resemblance to the earthly rows of man himself.

Each god or goddess came to assume certain powers. For instance, Hera, the wife of Zeus, was the guardian of the marriage state and a jealous one. She kept an eagle eye on her faithless spouse, wrought bitter vengeance on his unfortunate loves, and generally waged a strenuous, if unavailing, war on anything that threatened the dignity of the lawful wife.

But every god, except Zeus, knew distinct limitations to his powers and was vulnerable to misfortunes in certain respects, even as man. Balder, the Norse sun god, whose mother Frigga made everything except the mistletoe promise not to harm him, was slain by the insignificant shrub which Frigga had thought too harmless to be bothered about. Balder the Beautiful died; he went out to sea in his fiery ship, burning like the autumn foliage; the earth wept for him, and cold and darkness followed—an excellent picture of the coming of autumn and winter in the north country. So these man-made deities developed relationships and powers but were subject to certain limitations from other powers.

The extension of a god's powers soon

turned him into a symbolic figure, standing for certain abstract virtues. So Zeus, from being at first merely a sky god, became the symbol of power and law. Apollo began as the sun god, a beautiful young man with a fiery chariot to drive across the sky daily. Then he became also the god of health and healing, the patron god of physicians. Finally this idea of healing was expanded to include the related but less physical concept of purification, and Apollo then stood for the abstract idea of purity. Athena's birth from the brow of Jove was first supposed to suggest the sudden breaking of a storm, with thunderbolts and lightning cleaving the sky. Soon, however, she was venerated, not as a nature goddess, but as a source of wisdom, justice, and reason. In some such way as this, many of the gods evolved from mere nature personifications to become symbols of abstract moral attributes.

Of course, this evolution into symbolism was not true of all gods. Pan remained ever

... the dear son of *Hermes*, with his goat's feet and two horns—a lover of merry noise. Through wooded glades he wanders with dancing nymphs who foot it on some sheer cliff's edge, calling upon Pan, the shepherd-god...

Pan never became an abstraction but remained always the joyous denizen of woods and meadows, the lover of high song.

In some mythologies less sophisticated than the Greeks' the deities have never signified anything more than spirits of earth, sky, sun, moon, or even animals. The Indian "Old Man Coyote" is such a deity. On the other hand, the Navaho "Turquoise Woman" is not merely a sky goddess, but seems to be also a symbol of beauty in the highest sense, meaning harmony and goodness.

Finally, when the gods have come to stand for moral attributes and powers, the next and last stage of myth-making is the development of a priesthood, temples, and a ritual of worship. Then the myth has become an organized religion. Apollo had a great temple at

Delphi with priests, an oracle, vestal virgins, and elaborate ceremonies and rituals. There were temples to Zeus, to Demeter, and to the splendid Pallas Athena, until by the time the Apostle Paul arrived in Athens, temples had been built to so many gods that there was even an altar to "The Unknown God" lest one be overlooked. Few gods had as elaborate ramifications to their worship as Apollo. The Apollo cult represents the last and most complex stage of myth-making to which only the mythologies of highly civilized people attain. In this last stage, myth is the religion of a people and represents their highest ethical teachings. From this high state, it may degenerate, but at its best, it is idealistic, an organized system of worship and of ethical living.

### Types of myth stories

Among the simplest of myth stories are the little *why* stories, or *pourquoi* tales. Why the woodpecker has a red head and how the arbutus came to be are from the North American Indians. Why the sunflower turns to the sun (the story of Clytie) and how a flower was born of the blood of Apollo's accidental victim (the story of Hyacinthus) are from the Greek. Yet these Indian and Greek tales are similarly naive and childlike. Children enjoy a few such stories in connection with the study of a people and accept them with a comfortable sense of superiority.

In both Greek and Norse myths these *why* stories become more complex than in the American Indian woodpecker and arbutus examples. Take, for example, the Greek explanation of summer and winter; the story goes that Demeter (the earth mother) has been deprived of her beautiful child Persephone (the grain), who has been carried off by Hades to his realm below the ground. Demeter seeks her child, weeping, but Persephone must remain in Hades' dark world for six months of each year. Such a story is neither simple nor explanatory for a child. For him, it is a good fairy tale, and if he is to catch any glimpse of its seasonal signifi-

<sup>1</sup>Hesiod, *The Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, translated by Hugh G. Evelyn White, p. 443.



Illustration by Randy Monk for *The Adventures of Rama*  
by Joseph Gaer, Little, Brown, 1954 (book 5½ x 8)

*The story of Ramayana is often danced in ballet form. With this in mind, no doubt, the artist has very properly illustrated the episodes in the style of the conventional postures of Oriental ballet.*



cance, it has to be explained in careful detail. Similar to this tale is the Norse story told of Balder the Beautiful, their sun god, at whose death the whole earth weeps and falls into darkness (p. 289). So our North American Indians of the Southwest have their desert seasonal story of little Burnt-Face, the scorched earth, who sees the invisible chief, the spring rains, and is made beautiful by him and becomes his bride. To children, these three are just good fairy tales, as interesting and objective as "Cinderella." However, if in the study of Greeks, or Romans, or Norsemen, or Indians of the Plains, you explain to the children the possible meaning of these stories for the people who created them, they are surprised and delighted.

A second type of myth story is the *allegory*. Niobe, for example, boasts of her divine descent, is insolently proud of her powers and, above all, of her seven sons and seven daughters. She sets herself up as the equal of the goddess Leto, and, for this impious pride, Apollo and Artemis, Leto's twins, avenge their mother by striking down all fourteen of Niobe's children. Her pride brought low, frozen with grief, Niobe turns into a stone fountain, weeping forever for her children.

Human pride seems to be particularly offensive to the gods. Arachne was turned into a spider because she boasted of her weaving. Bellerophon, after he captured the winged horse, Pegasus, became so sure of himself that he attempted to ride into Zeus' dwelling and was promptly struck blind for his presumption. Some of these myths are almost like fables, and, like the fables, they could be summarized with a maxim or proverb. Others, like Arachne, are little *why* stories with a moral. Still others are involved adult alle-

gories. "Cupid and Psyche," standing for Love and the Soul, is such a tale. It must be painfully pruned and oversimplified for children. Fortunately, we have it in folk-tale form as our favorite "East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon." Pandora is another adult allegory—sin brought into the world by the "beautiful bane," woman. It is not even so simple a tale as that of Adam and Eve, and the significance of both Pandora and the Bible story escapes children.

The allegories are, on the whole, too adult in content and significance to be appropriate story material for children. But the simpler tales among them are accepted by the children exactly as they accept any folk tale. One of their favorites is "King Midas," who wished that everything he touched would turn into gold and soon found himself starving in the midst of plenty. And there is the charming tale of "Baucis and Philemon," the old couple who entertained the gods with their humble best and were granted their two wishes—to serve the gods and to be taken out of this world together. At the hour of death they were changed into an oak and a linden

tree, growing side by side. Well-told versions of such stories are as suitable for children as any other fairy tales and may be used with or without the background of the people and their mythology.

The *ways of the gods with men* make another group of stories which includes the two just mentioned, "King Midas" and "Baucis and Philemon." One of the most delightful of these is "Bellerophon and Pegasus." Bellerophon, a handsome youth, is sent by his host, Iobates, to kill the chimera, which is devastating Lycia. Although Iobates is sure the mission will mean the boy's death, the gods take pity upon Bellerophon and send him the winged Pegasus. That Pegasus, the winged horse of the gods, means poetry does not enter the children's heads, but that Bellerophon could not kill the terrible chimera until he had first captured and tamed Pegasus makes a good adventure story of unusual beauty. "Daedalus" (p. 372) is an interesting myth today, because it is the first story about men flying. Daedalus, a skilled engineer, invented some wings made of feathers and wax. His son Icarus flew with them, but when he came too near the sun the wax melted and down he plummeted into the sea we now call by his name—the Icarian Sea. "Jason and the Golden Fleece" is another good tale into which the gods enter indirectly. These are really hero tales with a background of myth and comprise a particularly good group of stories for children. Some of them, like those in the *Odyssey*, later developed into national epics.

The gods' amatory adventures among men are legion and are the ones we do not adapt for children. Zeus, Apollo, Aphrodite, and, in fact, most of the deities succumbed repeatedly to the charms of mortals. Their godly mates also wreaked ungodly vengeance on the poor humans; so these tales are both scandalous and cruel. Stories about the ways of nymphs and dryads with men are much like fairy lore. Sometimes they deserted their mortal mates; sometimes the men fled from them. On the whole, the earthly loves of the

gods make stories which are decidedly not for children.

Finally, the *ways of the gods with other gods* furnish us with another body of myth-stories, often complex in their significance and adult in content. Here we encounter nature myths which even the folklorists interpret differently and which leave the layman baffled and a bit weary with all the things which aren't what they seem. Frazer's *Golden Bough* is a repository for astonishing collections of these. Turning to the Greek stories again for examples, we find their tales of the creation not only involved but often repellent, and their interpretation decidedly a speculative matter. Consider Cronus, who swallowed all his children at birth, until the last son, Zeus, was saved by a deception. Later Zeus gave his cannibalistic father a potion which caused him to regurgitate the five sons and daughters he had kept handily tucked away in his divine interior. These young gods made war upon their unnatural father, and, once victorious, divided the world among themselves and dwelt in godlike glory on a glittering Olympus. Brothers marrying sisters, matings with monsters, the birth of monsters, continual infidelity among the deities, wars and more wars, jealousy and vengeance—these are the ways of the gods with other gods. Unfortunately, these stories also reflect some of the ways of man, in whose image they were conceived.

These are the least suitable of all myth-stories for children. Back of such accounts of the gods and their escapades are endless double meanings which may start simply with Gaea, a personification of the Earth, who is touched by Eros (Love), and bears Uranus (Heaven). Other stories, like "Cupid and Psyche," take on more abstract significance. Moving and profound is the story of Prometheus, the Titan, who dared the wrath of the gods to bring man fire, and suffered endless tortures as a result. Prometheus is so noble a symbol of sacrifice that poets and painters have repeatedly used his story as a theme. But these myths, with their symbolism

and inner meanings, are difficult for adults, and their ethical and religious significance has led many people to feel they have no

place at all in children's literature. Such myths are both too obscure and too meaningful, in an adult sense, for young minds.

## Sources of mythologies

Greek, Roman, and Norse are the great mythologies for our children. The myths of the North American Indian are important only in conjunction with the study of a special tribe of Indians. These Amerind myths have little or no uniformity and are difficult for children to understand. The myths of Egypt and India might be studied briefly in connection with a study of those peoples, but their myths are, for the most part, of interest only to adult students of mythology.

### Greek myths

The Greek myths come to us by way of the poet Hesiod, who is supposed to have lived during the eighth century B.C. He was a farmer and a bachelor with an abiding love of nature and an equally firm dislike of women. While he was guarding his father's flocks, so the story goes, the Muses themselves commissioned him to be their poet. So a poet he became, winning a contest and gratefully dedicating a tripod to the Muses, who had shown him the way.

His first famous poem, *Works and Days*, is largely didactic but is also a kind of farmer's calendar, telling when to sow or plant or harvest and what seasons are most propitious for different kinds of work. There are ethical lessons on industry and honest toil, some biting criticisms of women, and the earliest known fable in Greek, "The Hawk and the Nightingale." In addition to these moral and rustic cogitations, the book contains a dramatic version of the Pandora story and "The Five Ages of the World."

*Theogony*, another poem attributed to Hesiod, contains the Greek myths of the creation and the history of Zeus and Cronus, including Zeus' great battle with the Titans. Hesiod's picture of the defeated Titans, con-

fined and guarded by giants and by Day and Night, is a convincing one.

Hesiod is credited with bringing together in organized form the major portion of Greek mythology. The English translation, although in prose, makes interesting reading.

### Roman myths

The Roman versions of the Greek myths are available to us in the more familiar *Metamorphoses* of the Latin poet Ovid. Born in 43 B.C., Ovid belonged to a wealthy and privileged family. He was educated under famous Roman teachers, became a poet against his father's wishes, and, in contrast to Hesiod, was married three times. Only his last marriage was happy, and he seems never to have taken love or the ladies seriously. He belonged to the pleasure-bent, dissolute set which the Emperor Augustus was trying to discourage. When the poet's *Ars amatoria* appeared, its scandalous nature, coupled with some offense whose nature is not known, furnished sufficient cause for Ovid's eventual banishment. He was forced to live in a barbarous little town, where his writing must have been his only consolation. His sentence was never rescinded despite frequent petitions and Ovid died in exile.

The *Metamorphoses* consists of fifteen books recounting tales of miraculous transformations, hence the title. It begins with the metamorphosis of Chaos to order, follows the Greek development of gods and men, recounts innumerable *why* stories of flowers, rivers, rocks, and the like. It concludes, appropriately enough, with Julius Caesar turned into a star, and Ovid himself on his way to some form of immortality. These stories, even in our English prose translations, are amazingly dramatic. It is interesting to check the validity of modern versions with these stir-

toned down or omitted the peccadillos of the gods.

Finally, adaptations should be simple enough to be thoroughly comprehensible to children without sacrificing either the spirit or the richness of the originals. Too often, in order to simplify these stories, the adapter reduces the colorful details of the original to drab outlines devoid of charm. Simplification of some of the words is permissible enough and even essential. For example, Henry T. Riley's literal translation of Ovid's account of Phaethon's rash entrance into the presence of his father, the Sun, describes the youth standing at a distance because "he could not bear the refulgence nearer." Sally Benson's adaptation has "for the light was more than he could bear"—a legitimate substitution. Words must be simplified, paraphrased, or explained in advance. But reject an adaptation that omits the rich, descriptive details of Ovid's tale. It would be a pity to miss the pictures of the palace, the chariot, and the horses of the Sun, the account of Apollo's love and anxiety for the reckless youth, the portrayal of the boy's terror of the lonely heavens, and the descriptions of the rushing speed, the earth aflame, finally the Jovian bolt and then:

... Phaethon, the flames consuming his yellow hair, is hurled headlong, and is borne in a long tract through the air; as sometimes a star from the serene sky may appear to fall, although it really has not fallen. . . . The Hesperian Naiads commit his body, smoking from the three-forked flames, to the tomb, and inscribe these verses on the stone.—"Here is Phaethon buried, the driver of his father's chariot, which if he did not manage, still he miscarried in a great attempt."<sup>1</sup>

## How to use myths with children

### As the religion of a people

Some people believe that myth should be studied as the religion of a people. As a matter of fact, many church schools are using

<sup>1</sup>The *Metamorphoses of Ovid*, literally translated into English prose by Henry T. Riley, p. 59.

Another version translates the last lines:

He could not rule his father's car of fire,  
Yet was it much so nobly to aspire.<sup>2</sup>

According to these standards, what versions of mythology are best to use with children? Several good recent adaptations are listed in the bibliography, but some of the old versions are well worth consulting. One of these is *The Heroes* by Charles Kingsley, Victorian poet and scholar. His stories of Perseus, Theseus, and Jason have a nobility that should provide a wholesome antidote for the mediocrity of much of our mass entertainment. *The Golden Fleece* by Padraic Colum, the Irish poet, dramatist, and folklorist, is hard reading but a good source for storytellers. Helen Sewell's drawings for *A Book of Myths* enliven the classic Bulfinch versions. And Sally Benson's *Stories of the Gods and Heroes*, in spite of some disturbing modern touches, is lively and well liked. Pantheon has an exciting English edition of Gustav Schwab's *Die Sagen des Klassischen Altertums*. This book, *Gods and Heroes*, not only contains most of the Greek tales and legends, but has over one hundred illustrations from Greek vase painting.

When you want to use the Norse myths and hero tales, turn again to Padraic Colum, to his *Children of Odin*, a stirring and understandable version of those complex tales. An early adaptation that still serves well is Abbie F. Brown's *In the Days of Giants*, while Dorothy Hosford's *Sons of the Volsungs* and *Thunder of the Gods* cover the myths and the hero cycles in superb style. These are, however, the most difficult of all stories to tell.

mythology in this way, including the myths in a comparative study of religions for adolescent boys and girls. *The Tree of Life* is a splendid collection of myths from many peo-

<sup>2</sup>*A Book of Myths*, p. 39.

ples compiled for such study. The selections show the emergence, here and there throughout the centuries, of great religious ideals which are universal and command our respect today. Ideas of sin, repentance, expiation, and purification and ideals of faithful love and self-sacrifice are all to be found in the old symbolic myths, often magnificently expressed in story form or in hymns not unlike our Psalms. This sort of study probably belongs to late adolescence, although some families believe that even for young children it is a good approach to religious tolerance. Of course this is a matter for church schools and families to decide individually.

### ***With the study of a people***

The elementary schools often use the myths in connection with the study of a people. That is, the children who are studying the Vikings explore the Norse myths in order to understand the motives and the standards of behavior, the moral code of the Vikings. Or, if they are following the vicissitudes of the Greek hero Odysseus, they go into the Greek mythology in order to understand the Olympian battle of the gods—some ranged on the hero's side and some opposed to him. A study of certain forest Indians reveals a far less advanced mythology than that of the Navahos, but no tribe can be understood without the background of its particular ideology of the supernatural. It is, then, not only desirable but essential that any units about a people shall include a study of its religious ideals and practices.

### ***In the literature period***

Reading the myths in connection with the study of a people would seem to take care of these stories. Unfortunately, in many school systems the studies of early peoples are being replaced by units that are either "here and now," or tied into United States history. Since the high schools generally take for granted that something has been done with myths in the elementary schools, secondary schools may also omit them from the curriculum. The result is that many college freshmen today have

no knowledge of mythology. They don't know Jupiter, let alone Zeus. They see trees but no dryads, and they assume that the Delphian oracle was probably some kind of old-time fortuneteller, wearing a turban and gazing into a crystal ball. The glory that was Greece has no reality for them. This is not to suggest to the teachers of social studies that a unit of Greek life might have more lasting significance for elementary-school children than the study of the local garbage-disposal plant—both are important. Rather our problem is to see what can be done with mythology if Greek units are no more.

Certainly, if the high-school curriculum does not include myth, then for many reasons the elementary schools should—if not as the study of a people, then only as literature. In the literature periods we need not give children all the involved and confusing ramifications of the gods' genealogies, but we could introduce the major gods to them through stories which illustrate the characteristics and powers of the gods. Older children will be interested in the following Greek gods (Roman names in parentheses):

- Zeus* (Jove or Jupiter), the chief of the Olympian gods
- Hera* (Juno), wife of Zeus, goddess of women and marriage
- Athena* (Minerva), goddess of wisdom
- Aphrodite* (Venus), goddess of love and beauty
- Eros* (Cupid), god of love
- Artemis* (Diana), the virgin huntress, who is associated with the moon
- Poseidon* (Neptune), the god of the sea
- Hades* or *Pluto* (Dis), god of the underworld
- Dionysus* (Bacchus), god of wine and the harvest
- Hermes* (Mercury), messenger of the gods
- Ares* (Mars), god of war
- Hephaestus* (Vulcan), god of fire and metal-working
- Demeter* (Ceres), goddess of agriculture
- Persephone* (Proserpina), goddess of the underworld, spring

Decide to use consistently either the Greek or Roman names. The Greeks created the gods and the stories about them; the Romans merely adapted them, but the Roman names are more familiar and more generally used. Even the Greek hero Odysseus is better known to most people as Ulysses. To give children both sets of names is generally confusing; so keep to one or the other, perhaps according to the central book you may be using with the children.

The myths are indeed entirely appropriate for the literature period. Many stories about the gods are much like the finest of the fairy tales and are perhaps, in some cases, the sources of certain fairy tales. In "Baucis and Philemon," the gods, Zeus and Hermes, are glorified versions of the folk-tale godmothers or mysterious strangers who grant wishes as the rewards of hospitality or goodness. Older children who know "The Sleeping Beauty" find that the Greek "Demeter and Persephone" is a dignified edition of their old friend. Incidentally, this myth lends itself to superb dramatization by a mettlesome fifth or sixth grade. "Cupid and Psyche" may well be the source of "East o' the Sun," while "Jason and the Golden Fleece" is another search for "The Water of Life" or the destruction of "The Giant Who Had No Heart in His Body." Older children find the myths

even more beautiful and memorable than their favorite fairy tales, and they respond to their greater maturity appreciatively.

To conclude with a question—are we in danger of forgetting that childhood and youth should be fed on greatness if they are to dream and achieve greatness? In the story which opens Kingsley's *The Heroes*, the goddess Pallas Athené confronts Perseus with a choice of two ways of life. He can choose, she says, to be one of those souls of clay that

"... fatten at ease, like sheep in the pasture, and eat what they do not sow, like oxen in the stall . . . and when they are ripe death gathers them, and they go down unloved into hell, and their name vanishes out of the land.

But to souls of fire I give more fire, and to those who are manful I give a might more than man's. . . . For I drive them forth by strange paths, Perseus, that they may fight the Titans and the monsters, the enemies of Gods and men. . . ."

For every generation there are Titans and monsters to be conquered. For children of ten and older, mythology opens new imaginative vistas. These mortals who aspire to immortal deeds, these bright gods, and these "cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces" of Olympus are indeed "such stuff as dreams are made on," and no child should miss them.

## Epics and hero tales

In the source collections of myths, both Greek and Norse, there are (in addition to the stories of the gods) tales of human heroes, buffeted by gods and men but daring greatly, suffering uncomplainingly, and enduring staunchly to the end. Some of these heroes (for instance, Odysseus) accumulated so many stories about their names that the collection of these tales makes an epic. The word *epic* comes from the Greek *epos* meaning a saying or a song, but it has now come to signify, according to Helene Guerber in *The Book of the Epic*, "some form of heroic narrative wherein tragedy, comedy, lyric,

dirge, and idyl are skillfully blended to form an immortal work."

### Characteristics of the epic

Epics are sometimes written in verse, as the *Iliad* or the *Sigurd Saga*, and sometimes in prose, as Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*. The adventures of the legendary hero, Robin Hood, were preserved by the ballads. Miss Guerber's definition allows for a wide flexibility in the form and content of the epic; she includes such dissimilar materials as the great philosophical poem from the Hebrew, the Book of Job, the slight and romantic *Aucan-*

*sin and Nicolette* from the medieval French, and the comparatively modern *Paradise Lost* by Milton.

Most of us, however, think of epics as a cycle of tales about one hero, such as the *Odyssey* or the *Iliad*. These two heroic narratives have come to typify this particular field of literature. In them legendary heroes pursue legendary adventures, aided or hindered by partisan gods who apparently leave Olympus for the express purpose of meddling with human affairs. In short, myth may still be with us in the epic, but the dramatic center of interest has now shifted from the gods to a human hero. We have moved from Olympus to earth; we have transferred our sympathies from gods to men, from divine adventures to human endeavors.

The epic is strongly national in its presentation of human character. Odysseus may never have lived, but he is the embodiment of the Greek ideals of manly courage, sagacity, beauty, and endurance. Sigurd is the personification of Norse heroism; King Arthur is the whole code of chivalry in the flesh; and Robin Hood is the mouthpiece for England's passionate love of freedom and justice, as he is the ideal of hardy, jovial English manhood. Study the epic hero of a nation and you discover the moral code of that nation and era—all its heroic ideals come to life in one man.

Not all epics are suitable for children by any means, but certain epics give children a literary and an emotional experience as unforgettable as it is precious. The personification of great ideals in the hero, the sweep and excitement of heroic action, the thrilling continuity of the action, and the nobility of story after story—these are epic qualities for which there are no substitutes.

Teachers sometimes say that the epics take up too much time, that there isn't space in the curriculum for such intensive living with one piece of literature. Yet it is that very time element which is important to the richness of feeling that the epic builds. Many individual stories like "Ulysses and Circe" are valuable, but it is Ulysses' hardships day after

day, his resourcefulness, his vision, and his tireless endeavor that make the pathos of his homecoming and the triumph of his final bout with the wastrels a memorable experience for children. It is this living with greatness day after day that gives the epics their value for children.

### The Odyssey

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are attributed to Homer, a legendary Greek poet. Songs about the siege of Troy are known to have been sung shortly after the events took place, although the first written forms of the epics did not appear until some 600 years later. What Homer composed and what he compiled cannot be established, but the great epics known by his name were studied and recited by educated Greeks and there were apparently texts or arrangements of them from around 560 to 527 B.C. Authentic texts are established by 150 B.C. The date of Homer's birth has been variously estimated as from 1159 B.C. to 685 B.C., but by the time stories of Homer's life began to appear, nothing was authentically known about him. Legend has it that he was blind and poor and wandered from city to city singing his great songs. Seven cities vie with each other for the honor of being the place of his birth, but legend agrees only that it was somewhere in Ionia. One writer sums up this disputable evidence:

The man "Homer" cannot have lived in six different centuries nor been born in seven different cities; but Homeric poetry may well have done so. The man cannot have spoken this strange composite epic language, but the poetry could and did.<sup>1</sup>

The *Iliad* is certainly too complex and too long for the average child, but the adventures in the *Odyssey*, or *Ulysses*, are exciting and understandable to children. If units of Greek life have vanished from your school, there is still no reason why the children should not have *Ulysses*. Prompt the librarian to give it

<sup>1</sup>George Gilbert Aime Murray, "Homer," *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

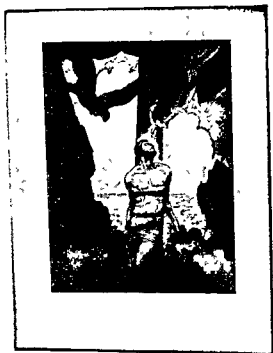


Illustration by N. C. Wyeth for *The Odyssey* translated by George Herbert Palmer, Houghton Mifflin, 1929 (original in color, book 7 x 9 1/4)

*Compare this picture with Wyeth's Robinson Crusoe, p. 45. Each picture has light and dark masses for dramatic contrast with powerful vertical and horizontal lines to give solidity. Here the center of interest falls in almost the exact center of the picture.*

to them in her story hour—a serial, one story a week, till the suitors are all wiped out and Ulysses is happily reestablished in his home with his faithful Penelope and his son Telemachus. If the librarian can't do it, why not try it yourself? No story is more rewarding to tell than this one. Superior readers can read it for themselves in the sixth or seventh grades, but it makes a strong appeal to younger children, as young as ten, and therefore seems to call for telling. As a continued story it may be divided into some such chapters as these:

By means of the famous Trojan horse, the Greeks conquer the Trojans, divide the spoils, and set off for their homes. Odysseus, ruler of Ithaca, sails hopefully. He loses some of his men to the strange Lotus-eaters but travels on.

Landing on the rude island of the Cyclops, Odysseus and his men fight for their lives with a one-eyed giant named Polyphemus. Odysseus saves the day by a clever trick.

To aid him on his journey, Odysseus is given a sack by Aeolus containing the winds. But through his men's curiosity and cupidity, they are stranded on the island of Circe. This en-

chantress turns some of them into swine, but Odysseus rescues all but one of them.

Odysseus offends the gods and is almost lost in trying to steer his course between the terrible whirlpool, Scylla, and the rock, Charybdis.

Clinging to the keel of his ship, Odysseus drifts at last to the island of the nymph, Calypso, who holds him as her unwilling guest for seven long years. Then at Zeus' command she bids him build a raft and be gone.

Drifting about on his raft, he comes to the land of the friendly Phaeacians, and is rescued by the beautiful Nausicaä, daughter of the King. Odysseus is brought to the king's palace and tells his tale. The Phaeacians, after games and feasts, equip him for his homeward journey and Odysseus says farewell to the lovely Nausicaä and sets sail.

Once on his native soil he hides in the hut of a swineherd until he can learn what has been happening. Only his old dog knows him. He meets his son Telemachus grown to manhood, learns of the wretched suitors' laying waste to his kingdom, and the faithfulness of his wife Penelope. Disguised as a beggar, he enters his own hall. Telemachus brings forth the great bow of Odysseus, but none can shoot it until the beggar tries and succeeds. Throwing off his disguise, Odysseus announces himself, and with his son beside him, takes aim at the suitors, who are killed or driven away. Odysseus proves his identity and is reunited with Penelope.

In the original story the actual chronological beginning does not appear until the ninth book, an arrangement which is at first confusing. Fortunately, most children's versions relate the story in the easier chronological form outlined above. Even this brief outline should make it evident that here is an adventure tale after the child's own heart.



What no outline can reveal is the exciting quality of the hero and the beauty of the style. In this epic the Greek ideals of cool intelligence, of patience and resourcefulness are found in both Penelope and Odysseus. They exhibit these qualities and hold tenaciously to their goals even when men and gods are arrayed against them. Over "the misty sea," "the wine-dark sea," Odysseus sailed for twenty years and none could stay him. This is a story of fortitude which every generation of children should know.<sup>1</sup>

### Sigurd the Volsung

The Norse epic, *Sigurd the Volsung*, is not so well known in this country as it deserves to be. There is a rugged nobility about the saga stories which boys especially appreciate. Because these tales reflect a simpler social order, many people consider them better suited to children than the Greek epics. This is a debatable point, since anyone who has ever tried to tell the saga of Sigurd knows all too well its difficulties. Obscurities in the text, difficult names much alike, and unpalatable social relationships upon which the main action of the story depends make this an epic which calls for expert handling. This you can understand from the following summary:

The first book, *Sigmund*, opens with the wedding of Signy, the daughter of King Volsung, to the wily Goth king, Siggeir. Suddenly into the great hall strides a man "one-eyed and seeming ancient." Deep into the tree, Branstock, he thrusts a gleaming sword with word that it is his gift to the man who can pluck it from the tree. Then the god Odin vanishes, and the men try to take the sword from the tree. The Goth king is enraged when he fails with all the others only to see Sigmund, the twin brother of the bride, take it easily. After the wedding, Signy's villainous husband extracts a promise from King Volsung that he, with his sons and his men, will come to the Gothland for a visit. Signy suspects foul play, but Volsung, having promised, will not break his word. The Volsungs go and are treacherously

slain, only Sigmund escaping. He hides in the forest, biding his time until he can avenge the death of his kinsfolk and rescue his twin sister, Signy, from her villainous mate.

To her brother, Queen Signy sends each of her sons to be tested for courage. The boys fail dismally. Then she knows that only a child of pure Volsung blood will have the mettle to aid her brother in his revenge. So she disguises herself as a beautiful witch and takes refuge with Sigmund. When the son of this union is born, she names him Sinfjotli and later sends him to Sigmund to be tested. The boy meets every trial and Sigmund begins his training. When Sinfjotli reaches manhood, the plan is made. They lay siege to the Goth King's hall, slay the men, and fire the hall. Sigmund calls to his sister to join them, but Signy appears on the balcony, tells her brother that Sinfjotli is his son, and bids them both farewell. She then returns to the burning hall and perishes with her husband. The book of Sigmund closes with his return to the land of the Volsungs, to reign once more in his Father's hall. Sinfjotli is tragically poisoned, and as Sigmund bears his son's body to the sea, a boat draws near, bearing a one-eyed stranger, "grey-clad like the mountain-cloth."

"My senders," quoth the shipman, 'bade me waft a great kin o'er, So set thy burden a shipboard . . .'"<sup>2</sup>

Sigmund does as he is told, and ship and burden vanish. Later Sigmund marries a noble woman but perishes in battle before their son is born. So ends the book of Sigmund.

The book of Regin is about Sigmund's second son, Sigurd, whose adventures are no less stormy than his father's. He wins a great horse, Greyfell; he is instructed by the wise Regin into the secret warfare of the gods; he is told about their hoard of gold, guarded by the serpent Fafnir. For Sigurd, Regin forges a mighty sword, but the young hero breaks the blade easily. Regin finally forges a sword from the fragments of Sigmund's blade. Mounted on Greyfell, armed with his Odin-given blade, Sigurd slays the serpent Fafnir on the Glittering Heath and drinks his blood, which enables him to understand the speech of the birds. Led by them, he discovers the sleeping Bryn-

<sup>1</sup>George H. Palmer's prose translation of the *Odyssey* is a splendid source of these tales.

<sup>2</sup>William Morris, *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung*, pp. 54-55.

held, a Valkyr or battle maiden, who had defied Odin and been condemned to a long sleep by the god. She was surrounded by a barrier of flames through which only a great hero could come to waken her. Sigurd kisses the sleeping Valkyr; she wakes, loves her rescuer, and accepts the magic ring he gives her to seal their love.

For children, the story is usually terminated here, although many adventures follow. These include a portion of forgetfulness for Sigurd, another wife, and a tragic death. The ride through the flames to wake the sleeping Valkyr makes the properly triumphant note on which to close this saga. Only adults can endure the tragic aftermath.

Even so sketchy an outline as this makes the difficulty of the material fairly evident, but it is magnificent to tell. Certainly the saga has some elements of violence in common with those crime stories which the modern child may be reading in the newspapers or seeing in moving pictures. But their differences are important. In the latter, the tales of blood and murder are sordid, horrifying, and uninspired. In the Sigmund-Sigurd stories, there is the nobility of great heroism, of keeping your word even though it costs you your life, of self-sacrifice for a greater cause, of death rather than dishonor, of ideals of race and family, of intrepid courage and perseverance. These justify the violence and leave the impression of nobility uppermost. If children must have blood and thunder and continually seek it in their movies, comics, and radio serials, why should we expurgate all of their literature? Should we not, instead, give them violence in its finest form, the great national epics which have left their mark on our moral code?

### Robin Hood

Of all the hero cycles, *Robin Hood* is unquestionably the children's favorite. It may not be the loftiest epic, nor Robin Hood the noblest hero, but his mad escapades, his lusty fights, his unflinching good humor when beaten, his sense of fair play, and, above all, his roguish tricks and gaiety practically define

"hero" for children. No year should pass without a fine moving-picture version of England's merriest outlaw and gentlest champion of the poor. Children should read *Robin Hood*, see it, and read it again. Indeed, no hero lends himself to dramatization on screen or in classroom so readily as this gallant leader of the Outlaws. School dramatizations of *Robin Hood* may be out-of-door affairs when the landscape includes enough trees. Otherwise the children can paint their own sets for an assembly program, or the story can be happily lived in any classroom, with a few props and plenty of spirit.

One woman still remembers her summer visits to a long-suffering grandmother, when a flock of cousins and a nearby woods became the Outlaw Band and Sherwood Forest. The props were not exactly right; the bows and arrows were passable, but a coonskin cap and a powder bag were pressed into service, and worn with authority. Their greens were motley until the children persuaded their mothers to equip them with green caps adorned with feathers from the chicken yard. These were sufficient. All summer they skulked and leapt through the trees, shot arrows into space, ran madly from the sheriff, and perspired mightily in the service of whoever had the good luck to be the Robin Hood of the day. This honor was passed around. To be sure, the youngest children never got an inning, but the older ones took turns, consoled in losing the lead by the richness of such rôles as Little John, Friar Tuck, and all the others. That is the beauty of *Robin Hood* for dramatization; all the parts are fat parts, and everyone can star who has an imagination. This brief outline recalls only the main points of the story:

*Robin Hood*, wrongly accused of shooting the King's deer, is deprived of his estates and driven into hiding. He takes refuge in Sherwood Forest, where he organizes an outlaw band of heroes as lusty as himself. A giant of a fellow, Little John, worsts Robin Hood in a battle of staves and joins the band forthwith. A curial friar, fat, jolly, and a good fighter, Friar Tuck

*Whether Louis Slobodkin is "making Moffats" (p. 408) or illustrating epics, you can always sense the sculptor's sure modeling of figures underneath the clothes. Robin Hood and Little John are indeed two solid fellows. Note the way this picture is framed, and the interesting use of angles to give vigor and movement to the whole.*

by name, is another useful member of the band. So, too, are Will Scarlet, Allan a Dale, Midge the Miller's son and all the others! This gay band continually harries its enemy the Sheriff of Nottingham, robs the rich to feed the poor, and generally conducts itself gallantly and triumphantly. Finally, there comes to Sherwood Forest a stout fellow who joins in the sports, quaffs ale with the fat friar, listens to the tales of wrongs righted and of the sheriff's downfall, and reveals himself as King Richard of the Lion Heart. To him the band swears loyalty. Lands and title are restored to Robin Hood and all ends merrily.

Or so you usually end a dramatization. But if the children read for themselves the Howard Pyle version, they will discover and weep over the tragic end of Robin Hood at the hands of the false Prioress. This is omitted in most school editions, but it is all right if the children discover it. They must learn that treachery and death exist, and that nothing lasts in this world but the little legacy of character a man leaves behind. With Robin Hood, this was so great a legacy that his name has never died, and today Robin Hood still means to us gallantry, gentleness, justice, and a warm gaiety which cannot be downed.

Children enjoy hearing some of the ballads of Robin Hood read aloud, but the prose version by Howard Pyle, with his spirited illustrations, is the text they should know. It is hard reading for most children, and if they can't read it for themselves they should hear it. For the lucky superior readers, it remains for generation after generation of



children one of the most exciting narratives in all literature.

#### **King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table**

Opinions differ as to the appropriateness of the King Arthur stories for young children. Certainly they are more mature in content and significance than either the *Odyssey* or *Robin Hood*. The individual adventures of some of the knights are as understandable as those of the Sherwood Forest band, but the ideals of chivalry are far subtler than the moral code of Robin Hood and his men. Too often brave deeds are performed for the love of a fair lady, and the Guinevere-Launcelot theme must be glossed over. For these reasons, many feel the cycle is better for the adolescent period when romance is uppermost and a code of chivalry needs to be established.

On the other hand, there are unusually good juvenile editions of the Arthur tales

for children, which, simplified though they are, satisfy the child's love of knights and knightly adventures and make an excellent introduction to the cycle which they will encounter later in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. Teachers who love the Arthur stories will have children who enjoy them. Certainly a saturation with any of these hero cycles is an enriching experience. Among the stories popular with the children are: "How Arthur Became King," "The Winning of the Sword Excalibur," "The Winning of a Queen," "The Story of Merlin," "Sir Lancelot," "Sir Gawaine," "Sir Galahad's Search for the Holy Grail," and "The Passing of Arthur."

It is the gentleness and beauty of these stories and the idealistic character of King Arthur and his knights which sometimes furnish children with their first idea of strength in gentleness, of the power that comes through disciplined restraint. Not that they can put these qualities into words, but they are there, embodied in the strong, gentle men who are the heroes of these tales.

### The Ramayana

There was no version of the *Ramayana* suitable for children until Joseph Gaer's *The Adventures of Rama* was published. This myth-epic of India tells how the god Vishnu came down to earth as Prince Rama, a mortal, to save mankind from the evil powers of Ravan. Once on earth, Rama behaves much like other epic heroes. He fights innumerable battles, marries the beautiful Sita, suffers banishment, gives way to suspicion and jealousy, and is put to shame by the gentle Sita's trial by fire. After that, all goes well, and throughout the ten thousand years of Rama's reign

Unknown were want, disease and crime,  
So calm, so happy was the time

The individual stories resemble Greek myths rather more than the usual epic does. Older girls will enjoy the strongly romantic flavor of the tales, while boys will appreciate the thread of brotherly loyalty that runs

through them. The illustrations suggest the dance, in which form the adventures of Rama are often shown in India.

### Other epics

The Irish *Cuchulain the Hound of Ulster*, the French *Story of Roland*, and even the English *Beowulf*, while of tremendous importance to folklorists and to students of literature, are not necessarily important for children. Not all the epics can be crowded into the child's experience, and they shouldn't be. We must choose those which are relatively the most appropriate for the years before adolescence. *Beowulf*, for instance, is in the heroic mold, but the fact that there is a dragon to be killed does not guarantee the suitability or the value of the story for children. It is, as a matter of fact, one of the bloodiest of all the sagas, with far less characterization of the persons involved, and less nobility of action, than are found in other epics. "St. George and the Dragon" is a more childlike tale of dragon-slaying, and the *Odyssey* and *Sigurd the Volsung* are richer in deeds and moral implications than the *Beowulf* stories.

Perhaps, in the schools, two epics in the years from ten to fourteen are about as many as the children can comfortably enjoy, living with them for weeks and savoring them thoroughly. These should be supplemented with such hero tales as the stories of Moses, Jacob and Esau, and Joseph and his brethren, since those also have entered into our speech, our thinking, and our moral code. Choose, then, from the epics the one or two which you yourself enjoy and which you believe will give the children the greatest enjoyment and enrichment. Then live with these, joyously and intensively, for six or eight weeks.

Fable, myth, and epic are different from each other in many ways, yet all three are not only a part of the great stream of folk literature but they are also embodiments of moral truths in story form.

The *fable* teaches briefly and frankly. A silly milkmaid starts imagining what she

will do with the money for her milk and promptly spills it. "Do not count your chickens before they are hatched," says the fable crisply. These fables furnish the child with his first excursion into the realm of abstract ideas, intellectual speculations about conduct. They are amusing in small doses but oppressive in the mass.

The *myth* teaches through symbols which grow more and more complex. "Aspire too high and you will fall far and hard," say the myths of Bellerophon and Icarus. But they also say, and Phaëthon reiterates, "It is nobler to aspire and fall from glorious heights than never to aspire and strive." In short, the symbolism of the myths soon ceases to have the simple, obvious moral of a fable and becomes as complicated as life itself, and it is then proportionately difficult for a child to understand. Fortunately, the myth stories possess a beauty that is satisfying in itself. The children cannot analyze the inner meaning of Bellerophon, Icarus, or Phaëthon, but they feel their nobility. Living on Mount Olympus with bright gods who transcend space and time, who can be what they will to be, gives a lift to the imagination and the spirit.

The *epic* embodies national ideals in the person of a human hero, a doer of mighty deeds. A long cycle of stories about such a hero allows time for real characterizations, for a continual reiteration of the moral code. The hero lives up to this code and he succeeds, or he fails with glory. If he violates

the code, he is punished. In the epic, as in life, morality becomes practical in such human crises as war or a fight for survival. Trickery may be resorted to when lives must be saved from the giant Polyphemus or from the Sheriff of Nottingham. But the code of keeping your word is sacred and is maintained manfully, even at the cost of your life, as in Volsung's tragic promise to visit the Goth King Siggeir. There is little preaching in the epics, but they give a child something to grow on—ideals of conduct in human form. Here are the great men of the race, the courageous, the resourceful, the gay reckless ones, the cool brainy ones—the men who have triumphed because they looked ahead, planned and calculated the cost, then leapt in and laid about them in good style. It is good for children to consort with greatness over a long period of time. Ideas and ideals have a chance to take hold.

So we leave traditional literature at a high level. Children have been treated to a progressively richer and richer legacy from *Mother Goose* to "Phaëthon," from "The Three Little Pigs" to *Odysseus*. Yet these gifts follow naturally—each good in its place, each offering new enjoyment. By the time the child reaches fable, myth, and epic, he must be older than when *Mother Goose* first took him by the hand. He must be capable of deeper feeling and understanding; for fable is a theorem, myth an allegory, and epic the glorification of man the doer, the hero.

*Charlotte's Web*

I am surprised that I used it at all. As for my whereabouts, that's easy. Look up here in the corner of the doorway! Here I am. Look, I'm waving!"

At last Wilbur saw the creature that had spoken to him in such a kindly way. Stretched across the upper part of the doorway was a big spiderweb, and hanging

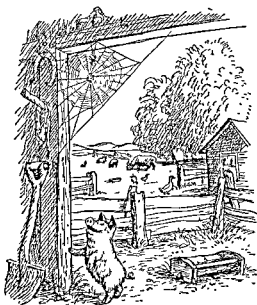


Illustration by Garth Williams for *Charlotte's Web*, by E. B. White, Harper, 1952 (book 5½ x 8)

*Garth Williams' pen and-ink drawings make the activities of these creatures perfectly believable. Note the realistic touches—the old shovel, the feeding trough, the peaceful cows.*

The distinction between the old folk tale and the modern fairy tale is of no importance to the child. Magic is magic to him whether he finds it in Grimm, Andersen, or Dr. Seuss. Children do not think of their stories in the conventional categories of literature or of libraries but describe their favorites broadly as animal stories or funny stories or true stories or fairy tales, by which they mean any tale of magic, old or modern. The elements in the folk tales which make them particularly appealing to children are the same ones which make the fanciful tales attractive. In fact, interesting story patterns, style, and characterizations are elements essential to any good story for children. Many of the old folk tales were unsuitable for children because of their bawdiness, or their violence, or their adult themes and situations. Some modern fanciful stories err because they are overwhimsical or unduly sophisticated or, worse still, because they talk down to children. As we select from the new fanciful stories being published each year for children, let's keep in mind (along with good story patterns, style, and characterization) sincerity and directness as essential characteristics for these stories—or for any stories for children.

The development of modern fanciful tales has been so astonishing and varied that it merits detailed examination. Because there are so many of these tales, this chapter can con-

sider only a few—stories which have remained favorites over the years, recent ones which have attained great popularity, and certain ones which illustrate trends.

## The beginnings of the modern fanciful tale

Hans Christian Andersen is generally credited with launching the literary fairy tale. Actually, it began in the French court of the seventeenth century, with elaborations of traditional tales. Fairy tales moved boldly from the hut in the woods to the fashionable drawing rooms of the court and became the vogue of the sophisticates in the century of Louis XIV. Perrault's eight little *contes* were the rage, but adorned though they were with the gentle art of a skilled writer, they remained genuine folk tales, perhaps a shade too simple for the intelligentsia. So, the cultivated ladies of the court picked up the pattern and began their embroideries.

Mme. d'Aulnoy with her "White Cat," "Graciosa and Percinet," "The Yellow Dwarf," and others turned the fairy tale into an involved tale full of double meanings and romance. Her stories, published around 1700, were popular in their day, and in adapted or shortened form are still found in modern collections.

### Hans Christian Andersen, 1805-1875

Andersen's life was as incredible as his fairy tales. He was born at Odense, Denmark. His father, a poor shoemaker, disappointed because he could never be a scholar, cherished a shelf of the classics which he shared with his son. The mother was an uneducated peasant with a protective tenderness for the strange boy whom she could only partially understand. After the father died, the mother married again, but was obliged to support her son as a washerwoman. Up to her knees in the cold water of the river, suffering from the rheumatic pains which afflicted all the washerwomen of Odense, this poor soul helped her son as long as she lived. There was

Mme. Leprince de Beaumont wrote chiefly in a didactic vein for children, but happily she had her lighter moments, and her "Beauty and the Beast" (1757) was one of these. With this charming adaptation of a famous folk-tale theme, she forgot her need to improve children's manners and morals; sheer enchantment was the result. Her story is, of course, strongly reminiscent of the Norse "East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon" and Grimm's "Bearskin." But Beauty seems more human and convincing than the lassies in the older stories, and neither of the four-footed heroes in the folk tales has the heart-wringing pathos of Beauty's sighing Beast. Although this is not an original tale, Mme. de Beaumont has retold it so tenderly and with such inventive touches that it has long been the favorite version of that theme. Andersen, too, began with skilful adaptations of traditional tales, but so creative was his genius that he lifted the modern fairy tale to greatness and is deservedly called its originator.

a feeble-minded grandfather, of whom Hans was horribly ashamed, and a cheerful little grandmother, who tended the gardens of the insane asylum and told Hans fantastic tales of his family. The boy heard also the stories and superstitions of the peasants, and the weird imaginings of the patients in the insane asylum.

Poor and ignorant, romantically vain and proud, young Hans avoided school and lived in a dream world of his own creation. He made a puppet theater, dressed his puppets with remarkable skill, and dramatized the stories and the plays he was reading so avidly. He was spellbound by Shakespeare's plays

Illustration by Marcia Brown for *Puss in Boots*  
by Charles Perrault, Scribner, 1952  
(original in color, book 8½ x 10½)



Puss, receiving his just deserts, is handsomely rigged up in the costume of a cavalier. The White Cat, exquisitely dressed in the seventeenth-century costume of the French court, seems a grande dame from the tip of her beaddress to her slippered toe. The style of these illustrations brings out the characters they portray. The White Cat appears as stiff and formal as a fashion plate, she is obviously interested in playing the delicate lady. Puss, on the other hand, is drawn with freely flowing lines, giving the impression of dash and vigor.

The contrast can be seen even in the eyes: the lady's, shy, demure; the lord's, masterful, proud.

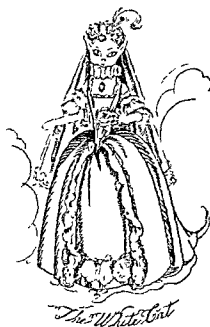


Illustration by Elizabeth MacKinsley for *The White Cat and Other Old French Fairy Tales* by Mme. La Comtesse D'Aulnoy, Macmillan, 1928  
(original in color, book 6½ x 10¼)



and soon imagined himself becoming a great dramatist. With equal ease, he imagined himself as a ballet dancer, a great actor, a singer, a poet, in spite of the fact that he was as strikingly ugly and awkward as he was uneducated. He was overtall for his age, with big hands and feet, a big nose, a shock of yellow hair over his eyes, and a gangling body which was always outgrowing the poor clothes he somehow managed to keep clean and neat. But none of these limitations disturbed him, so strong were his dreams.

At fourteen he set off for Copenhagen alone to seek the fortune which he never doubted would await him. The disillusioning years which followed would have crushed a less intrepid soul. He literally broke in upon opera singers, ballet masters, and men of literature, and sang, danced, or recited poetry for them whether they wished it or not. He was considered mildly mad, was snubbed on all sides, and was reduced to near starvation; but here and there someone always believed in the strange boy. Musicians helped him first, until his high, sweet soprano voice changed and he was of no use to the choir. Then Jonas Collin, director of the Royal Theater, obtained a small pension for the boy and made him go back to school. Before starting to school again, he published his first book, *The Ghost at Palnatok's Grave*. At the great grammar school at Slagelse and at another school in Elsinore, he remained for some five or six years. These were the bitterest years of his entire life, and the schoolmaster who humiliated and tortured him used to appear in the nightmares which haunted Andersen's old age.

Returning to Copenhagen, educated in some degree, he resumed his writing of plays and poetry with only moderate success. In 1833 Andersen traveled on a modest stipend, granted to him by the king, and visited all those countries whose glories he was to give back to the world in his *Fairy Tales*. The first volume of these was published in 1835. They created no special stir, but, as more of them appeared in the ensuing years, their

fame grew and spread to other countries until Hans Andersen suddenly found himself famous as the author of the *Fairy Tales*, which became as much the vogue as the *Contes des fées* in eighteenth-century France, and completely eclipsed all of the author's more pretentious works. Andersen, never wholly resigned to the allocation of his fame to his stories for children, continued to struggle with other types of writing even while producing more fairy tales. These were translated into almost every European language and brought Andersen the friendship of notable artists all over the world, from Jenny Lind to Charles Dickens. When Andersen traveled, he was sought after and lionized everywhere he went. In England, his tour was turned into a triumphal procession from one great house to another, but the most poignant of all his triumphs must have been his return to his native Odense. There he was carried on the shoulders of his countrymen, who filled the streets to do him honor.

Did he remember his humble, unhappy father reading the classics to him, his mother washing clothes in the river, the pitiful grandfather from whom he fled in terror, the little grandmother who brought him flowers and loved him dearly? They were all gone when their child, now a famous man, returned to prove that their love and sacrifices had not been in vain. Their "Ugly Duckling" had indeed turned out to be a royal swan!

Except for the bad dreams, Andersen's old age was as peaceful and happy as his youth had been tragic. The world, which had laughed at the vain, childlike boy, now cherished and revered the famous old man, the favorite son of Odense and Copenhagen.

The stories themselves, probably the greatest fairy tales ever written, have a freshness and range that are just as astonishing today as they were to Andersen's generation. He may have started retelling the old folk tales and combining folk-tale motifs into new tales, but he was soon creating original patterns of his own, which are still being used by present-day authors of fanciful tales. His

stories fall into rather obvious classifications, which are worth noting because we shall find modern tales of magic grouping themselves under these same headings.

### Retelling of old tales

First, there are Andersen's versions of familiar folk tales such as "What the Good-Man Does Is Sure to Be Right!" which is our Norse friend "Gudbrand on the Hill-side"; "Hans Clodhopper," which is "Lazy Jack"; "Great Claus and Little Claus," which is "Hudden and Dudden"; "The Wild Swans," which is Grimm's "The Six Swans" and Asbjornsen's "Twelve Wild Ducks." When Andersen retold these old tales, he never destroyed the essential elements of the original plots but merely added little embellishments, little characterizations, so charming and so right that they are never forgotten. For instance in "What the Good-Man Does Is Sure to Be Right!" you get a little preparation for the happy end when the old wife prepares her husband for market:

So she tied on his neckerchief—for that was a matter she understood better than he—she tied it with a double knot, and made him look quite spruce; she dusted his hat with the palm of her hand; and she kissed him and sent him off, riding the horse that was to be either sold or bartered. Of course, he would know what to do.

### New stories in folk-tale style

Andersen was so steeped in folk-tale motifs and style that his stories seem to have come out of some old folk collection. "The Elf-mountain" sounds curiously like an Asbjornsen tale. "Thumbelina" might be a feminine version of the Russian "Peter Pea," the English "Hop-o'-My-Thumb," or Grimm's "Thumbelina," but is, of course, an original tale. "The Little Mermaid" is remotely reminiscent both of the water nixies who desire human husbands and of wives and sweethearts who go through untold sufferings to rescue their beloveds. Yet these and other Andersen tales are not retellings but completely new stories

in the old manner, using familiar motifs in new combinations.

### Humorous tales

When Andersen is retelling a folk tale or improvising in folk-tale style, he often falls into the hearty, slapstick humor of the old stories. Good examples are his genuinely droll "Great Claus and Little Claus" and some of the fantastic episodes in the "Elf-mountain." But the moment he begins to write original stories, his humor becomes more subtle, less childlike, often satirical. "The Princess on the Pea," "The Swineherd," and "The Emperor's New Clothes" (p. 378) are all biting satires on adult foibles, and the humor is exceedingly ironical. After presenting a picture of a princess atop twenty mattresses under which is one little pea that causes her acute suffering, Andersen concludes, with tongue in cheek, "Was not this a lady of real delicacy?" This is as sly a jibe at snobbery and the myth of blue-bloodedness as can be found anywhere.

He uses "The Swineherd" to make fun of false standards and people who prefer the artificial and the trivial to the durable satisfactions of life. In "The Emperor's New Clothes," Andersen relieves his mind of all its pent-up bitterness against the pompous pretentiousness of the rogues and fools who sometimes inhabit high places. This is not childlike humor, but the irony of an adult lampooning some of the cruel foibles from which he has suffered. Fortunately, most of the satire goes over the children's heads, and they take the stories literally. They are perfectly serious over the absurd princess on her twenty mattresses, and they accept the emperor as the broadest kind of farce. Nevertheless, Andersen's humor is adult rather than childlike and is predominantly satirical rather than truly and obviously funny.

### Inanimate objects personified

Stories about inanimate objects seem to have been Andersen's invention and special delight. "The Darning Needle," "The Drop

of Water," "The Flax," "The Fir Tree," "The Constant Tin Soldier," and "The Top and the Ball" are only a few of the stories in which Andersen has endowed objects with life and turned their exploits into stories. They are good stories, too, although many of them are sad and adult in theme and therefore not popular with children. Modern authors have picked up Andersen's innovation and put it to happier and more childlike uses.

### Talking beasts

The story with animals that talk is an old form which Andersen uses less frequently than others but carries to a more complex and symbolic level than is found in the folk tales. The traditional story, "The Three Little Pigs," for instance, tells a simple tale of brains against brawn and is understandable and childlike. When Andersen told the story of "The Ugly Duckling," he wrote his own biography in symbols which are strangely moving. Writing of the ugly duckling, he says, "The poor little thing scarcely knew what to do; he was quite distressed, because he was so ugly, and because he was the jest of the poultry-yard." The duckling went out into the world to seek his fortune, but there also he was snubbed, laughed at, persecuted, and left bitterly alone. He saw the swans flying "so very high . . . he could not forget them, those noble birds!" When he could no longer see them, "he plunged to the bottom of the water, and when he rose again was almost beside himself . . . the poor, ugly animal!"

Finally, after an almost unendurable winter, the spring came again and with it the swans. He approached them expecting they would kill him, but they welcomed him as one of themselves, and when he looked in the water, he saw his own reflection—not that of an ugly duckling, but of a swan! "It matters not to have been born in a duck-yard, if one has been hatched from a swan's egg." "The Ugly Duckling" is no folk tale but an allegory that touches everyone. Are

not most of us ugly ducklings, waiting for that marvelous moment of recognition when the swans shall welcome us into their noble company? This theme goes deeper than the Cinderella motive, for it shows us a human soul struggling pitifully and fiercely against its own limitations. Fortunately, it is also a convincing story of a misplaced swan baby, which pleases children eight to twelve years old, even while it gives them a sense of larger meaning, felt, if not clearly apprehended. "The Nightingale" is Andersen's old sermon against the false standards of society but less satirical and more tender than "The Swineherd."

### Fantasy

Finally, Andersen took the make-believe and the magic of the folk tales and developed tales of pure fantasy which have never been surpassed—"The Marsh King's Daughter," "The Little Mermaid," "The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf," "The Little Match Girl," and, finest of them all, "The Snow Queen." What tales these are! Every one of them is allegorical; but, in most cases, they are excellent stories despite their secondary meaning. "The Marsh King's Daughter" is a weird tale of a changeling—a savage, cruel girl by day, a kindly, hideous frog by night. Here is man's dual nature in perpetual conflict until love and pity conquer the evil. The story is not for children, but is a first-rate tale and perhaps an ancestor of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

"The Little Mermaid" concerns the old folklore conflict of a fairy creature who loves a human being. The selfless love of the mermaid endures every suffering for the sake of her beloved. Finally, losing her life, she wins the hope of immortality. Love is never wasted and carries its own benediction, Andersen seems to be saying. Again, this is a story for older children and adults and so, too, is that tale of sin, "The Girl Who Trod on the Loaf," despising God's gifts and suffering a terrible punishment. It recalls Grimm's "Our Lady's Child," although it is a completely new story. On the other hand, children under-

stand and love "The Little Match Girl" and "The Snow Queen." The former may be too sad for many children, and certainly they have wept over it ever since it was written, but there is no story in all literature that speaks more movingly of God's mercy and pity for suffering.

"The Snow Queen" is almost a novelette and, aside from its rather subtle symbolism, is an exciting adventure tale in a dream world of strange beauty. Like all of the other fantasies, this begins realistically. Two real children, sitting on their roof-top under a real rose vine, share a real picture book and a loving companionship. Then a glass splinter gets into Kay's eye and the magic begins. The splinter stabs his heart, too, which becomes as cold as ice. He sees faults in everything that he used to find good, even his little friend Gerda. Finally he is whisked away to the Snow Queen's palace, where the empty iciness suits him perfectly and he can play "the ice-puzzle of reason" to his heart's content. Meanwhile Gerda, hurt by Kay's unkindness but still loving him, sets out to find him. Her adventures are like a series of dreams, each strange and incredible but linked together by Gerda's determination to rescue her little friend. She finds him at last, stonily, icily cold, but her hot tears of grief melt the mischievous splinter, and Kay is restored to joy and love.

#### Characteristics of style

"The Snow Queen" is often ranked as Andersen's masterpiece, and indeed it exhibits Andersen's characteristic style at its best. Here are conversations so lively and natural that whether a Robber-maiden, a Buttercup, or a Reindeer speaks, you feel you have known him well. Like Gerda, you are even a bit apologetic because you cannot speak Ravenish to the Raven. No one has ever handled dialogue more easily and happily than Andersen. The characterizations often suggested by a conversation are swift and masterly. For instance, Kay's sudden change of heart after the splinter strikes him is

apparent in his spiteful, angry words to poor Gerda:

"Why do you cry?" asked he; "you look so ugly when you cry. . . . Fie!" exclaimed he again, "this rose has an insect in it, and just look at this! after all they are ugly roses! and it is an ugly box they grow in!" Then he kicked the box and tore off the roses.<sup>1</sup>

The wild Robber-maiden is curiously convincing with her biting and kicking, her sudden, grave reaching out toward kindness, but with her dagger handy, just in case. The weird people in this tale all come to life, sketched briefly but surely, sometimes with a line of description but more often only by means of their own words. Andersen uses description most often for the landscape, and certainly nothing he has written excels the paragraph picturing the Snow Queen's palace:

The walls of the palace were formed of the driven snow, its doors and windows of the cutting winds; there were above a hundred halls, the largest of them many miles in extent, all illuminated by the Northern Lights; all alike vast, empty, icily cold, and dazzlingly white. No sounds of mirth ever resounded through these dreary spaces; no cheerful scene refreshed the sight—not even so much as a bear's ball, such as one might imagine sometimes takes place; the tempest forming a band of musicians, and the polar bears standing on their hind paws and exhibiting themselves in the oddest positions. Nor was there ever a card-assembly, wherein the cards might be held in the mouth, and dealt out by the paws; nor even a small select coffee-party for the white young lady foxes. Vast, empty, and cold were the Snow Queen's chambers, and the Northern Lights flashed now high, now low, in regular gradations.<sup>2</sup>

#### Using Andersen's tales with children

Whether or not children enjoy these stories depends upon the children, their age, and how the stories are presented. Obviously, they are not for young children. A few eight-year-olds may enjoy them, but the ten- and

<sup>1</sup>Rex Whistler edition of *Andersen's Fairy Tales*, p. 122.  
<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 147.

eleven-year-olds are more likely to appreciate them. Probably such a story as "The Snow Queen" should be read aloud to children over a number of days. Then it will not seem overlong, and the children can enjoy its strange beauty. "The Ugly Duckling," "The Tinder Box," "What the Good-Man Does Is Sure to Be Right!" and others of the simpler type they can read for themselves.

Because of the double meanings, the adult themes, and the sadness of many of these stories, the whole collection is usually not popular with children. It has indeed almost dropped out of our schools. Children are direct, forthright creatures, and ambiguity makes them uneasy. As one child said sadly about an allegory, "It's a story where everything is what it ain't," and they soon get tired of speculating about which is which. Too many double meanings, too much sadness are not good for children, and for that reason Andersen's stories should not be presented in a mass, but one or two stories should be given in the fourth grade, two or three more in the fifth, and two or three in the sixth. Then, if some child wishes to explore the whole collection on his own, well and good. There are always a few children who love these tales above all others.

It seems a great pity for children to miss Andersen's *Fairy Tales* entirely, both because they are good literature and because they have about them a wholesome goodness which children need before they encounter too much evil. The tales are moralistic but unobtrusively so, and the morals they exhibit are the humble ones of kindness, sincerity, and faith in God. The deeply religious note in many of these tales never seems forced or dragged in but is there as naturally as

sunshine on the sand, warming everything. Andersen is not afraid to show children cruelty, sorrow, even death, but they are presented so gently that the children understand and are not hurt. He shows them rogues and fools along with hosts of kind, loving people, and he seems to be saying, "Well, this is the world. Which group will you join?" Then he makes them laugh at the rogues, but when he shows them the goodness of people he brings tears to their eyes or smiles of tenderness. Their young hearts are touched, and "The Little Match Girl," or "The Ugly Duckling," or Gerda they never forget. Paul Hazard says:

*It is this inner life that gives the Tales their deep quality. From it also comes that exaltation which spreads through the soul of the readers. From it comes, finally, a marked quality of serenity. . . .*

The children are not mistaken. In these beautiful tales they find not only pleasure, but the law of their being and the feeling of the great role they have to fill. They themselves have been subjected to sorrow. They sense evil confusedly around them, in them; but this vivid suffering is only transitory and not enough to trouble their serenity. Their mission is to bring to the world a renewal of faith and hope. (Books, Children and Men, pp. 104-105)

Beautifully illustrated editions of single stories, such as Marcia Brown's *Steadfast Tin Soldier* and Johannes Larsen's *Ugly Duckling*, are good introductions to Andersen's tales for children who might find the whole collection too forbidding.

It is interesting to note how recent tales of magic follow or depart from Andersen's original patterns, although certainly few modern fanciful tales have the deep sense of spiritual values found in Andersen's work.

## Modern adaptations of old tales

Andersen set such an admirable standard for the retelling of old tales that it is worth keeping in mind when we are called upon to judge the modern versions which are continually appearing. Andersen's adaptations

are right because they make the stories suitable and understandable for children while maintaining the integrity of the source. Of course, there must be some changes in these old tales, created by adults for adults, if they

are to be read or told to children. Dialect or coarse language must be altered, cruelties toned down, biological facts of mating and infidelity omitted or obscured. In "East o' the Sun," for instance, adapters have made the strange man, who came each night to the lassie, enter another room or get into another bed. Andersen in "Great Claus and Little Claus" endows the husband of the faithless wife with a special antipathy for "sextons"; so the infidelity motive is amusingly glossed over. Yet neither of these changes interferes in any way with the essential body or style of the story. This is the standard Joseph Jacobs adhered to and defended. He altered a folk tale in such ways as to make it suitable and understandable to children without changing the core of the story. In using the sources of traditional material, the practice of Jacobs and Andersen is commendable. On the other hand, if the tale requires many changes, it is probably unsuitable for children either in content or style.

### Desirable adaptations

Next to Hans Andersen's sensitive and intelligent adaptations, Howard Pyle's *Wonder Clock* is one of the happiest collections of old tales retold that we have. The stories are chiefly from Grimm but include some legends, too, such as stories of St. Nicholas and St. Christopher. Pyle takes more liberties with his material than Andersen did, but the essence of the story is there. His conversations are so lively and humorous that this book is a favorite with storytellers.

Chapter 11 commented upon the successful adaptations of Russian folk tales by Arthur Ransome, Czech tales by Parker Fillmore, and the Grimm tales by Wanda Gág. These are all admirably done in the Andersen-Jacobs style. So, too, are the more recent adaptations Marcia Brown has made of *Dick Whittington*, *Puss in Boots*, *Cinderella*, and the droll *Stone Soup*. These retellings seem easy to do until you explore other modern adaptations and discover how much easier it seems to be to destroy the simplicity and

directness of the originals and to come out with something unpleasantly sophisticated.

### Undesirable adaptations

As we have seen, Nathaniel Hawthorne laid a pattern for this undesirable type of adaptation. In his *Tanglewood Tales* he rewrote the Greek myth completely, turning the gods into willful little boys and girls, and modernizing and domesticating them in strange ways. Because Hawthorne was an artist, his tales are beautifully and excitingly written, but his willingness to violate sources leaves a story that is dramatic but that is somehow not myth.

So Walt Disney had this classic precedent for the liberties he has taken with both folk tales and myth. He began beautifully with his film version of "The Three Little Pigs," which was perfection. In that picture he was true both to the spirit and the letter of the tale. His embellishments in songs and additional dialogue were in character, and no one who saw that film will forget the irresistible animation of Little Pig, his blithe defiance of the "big bad Wolf," the charming music, the satisfying conclusion. No film has ever been more beloved by adults and children alike, and it ought to be revived yearly for each new crop of movie-goers.

In Disney's film and text versions of "Snow White," the elaborations and distortions of the old tale were so evident that many discerning children and grown-ups were disappointed. The music was delightful, the dwarfs and the little creatures of the forest were unforgettable, but Snow White herself was turned into a coy glamour girl with mascara and batting eyelashes. Gone was the pathetic child of the old tale. The wicked queen was magnified to horrific proportions and, together with Dopey, was allowed to steal or dominate the show. "Bambi" and "Pinocchio" suffered still more from excessive embellishments in the film and attenuation in the text. This oversimplification of a story together with an elaboration of pictorial details may possibly make good theater, but

Illustration by Fritz Kredel for *The King of the Golden River* by John Ruskin, World Publishing Company, 1946 (original in color, book 5¼ x 8½)

*Fritz Kredel has caught the feeling of Ruskin's story in his colorful pictures. The spirit of the mug is a round, golden little man, and the lad is a handsome fairy-tale hero. Clear type and fine paper make this an outstanding edition of The King of the Golden River.*

it certainly results in deplorable books. The Disney versions of these stories now on the market are incredibly meager and flat. All the imaginative quality of the old tales seems to have gone out of the text and to have been transferred to the charming illustrations. Children who know the full-bodied originals resent these texts in spite of the pictures with which they are lavishly adorned.

When Disney's original inventions, Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck, Dumbo, and the Singing Whale, are so delightful, why does he play such havoc with traditional or well-known stories? The answer is, of course, that, unlike Andersen or Wanda Gág, he does not respect the grave, simple directness of the sources. What comes out is often so altered and sophisticated that the sincerity of the original is destroyed.

## Modern tales in folk-tale style

**H**ans Andersen was steeped in folk-tale tradition. He could create new stories in a similar vein, and his inventions seem to have inspired a few writers of almost every generation.

### Robert Southey The Three Bears

To discover that "The Three Bears" was written by the poet Robert Southey is something of a shock. It has all the earmarks of a folk tale, and perhaps it is one, because Southey's version with a nosy old woman instead of a little girl is not our version. Whoever perpetuated the snooping little girl in place of the old woman may have heard the

story in that form, before or after Southey's. At any rate, as "Silverhair" in England and "Goldilocks" in America, she captured the nursery crowd, and no one ever tells the Southey version now. "The Three Bears" rivals "The Three Little Pigs" in popularity and is generally classified as a folk tale.

### John Ruskin The King of the Golden River

John Ruskin tried writing "The King of the Golden River" in the old fairy-tale style. It is for children ten to fourteen, but many of them avoid it because of its length and reading difficulty. This powerful tale with something of the somber, frightening air of



Before Gluck stood the King of the Golden River (Page 10)

the medieval legends tells the story of little Gluck, a cinder lad tormented by his cruel older brothers, Hans and Schwartz. A mysterious visitor, the South-West Wind, is treated kindly by Gluck and meanly by the brothers, and the stranger vows revenge. How Gluck discovers in the melting golden mug the King of the Golden River and with the King's help wins back his inheritance makes an exciting tale. The evil brothers are disposed of in good folklore style and Gluck is safe forever. This story is well written and genuinely dramatic. Children should have it read aloud to them or if they wish to read it themselves, they should have it in an easier reading form than the original.

### Howard Pyle

#### *Pepper and Salt*

No one, not even Andersen, has been more successful in creating new fairy tales in the old folk-tale patterns than Howard Pyle has been in his delightful *Pepper and Salt*. This is a favorite book with teachers and parents who like to tell stories or read them aloud. There are eight stories interspersed with clever verses and equally clever drawings by the author. Humor is the prevailing tone of the whole book. Older children like to read it for themselves as well as to hear the stories read or told.

The first tale is typical of the way Pyle has used old folk motives with new and humorous invention. In "The Skillful Huntsman," Jacob, a poor and supposedly stupid lad, wishes to marry Gretchen, the Mayor's daughter. The Mayor, to get rid of him, sets Jacob a series of tasks, the first of which is to shoot the whiskers off a running hare. Jacob meets a stranger clad in red with cloven hoofs. The stranger offers to make Jacob the greatest of all hunters and to obey his commands for ten years if at the end of that time Jacob will go with him. The lad agrees on one condition: at the end of the ten years, if the stranger cannot answer Jacob's question, Jacob is free. The bargain is made; Jacob accomplishes every task and marries Gretchen. At the end of the

fateful ten years, the stranger comes for Jacob. They agree to enjoy one last hunt, and the stranger is to tell Jacob what to shoot. Gretchen appears in the far distance, all covered with feathers, and he of the cloven hoof commands Jacob to shoot. "But what is it?" asks Jacob innocently. The baffled gentleman in red is obliged to admit he does not know, and so Jacob is free. The whole tale is lightly and wittily told, with old motifs in new and amusing dress.

### Oscar Wilde

#### *The Happy Prince and Other Fairy Tales*

"Beauty and the Beast," "The Three Bears," "The King of the Golden River," and Pyle's stories are all written with the directness of traditional tales and legends. But Oscar Wilde's fairy tales are art forms, polished and adult. Two of Wilde's allegories, "The Happy Prince" and "The Selfish Giant," have been rather generally used for storytelling in the elementary school. The former is so sentimental and morbid it clearly does not belong to children, but "The Selfish Giant" has all the earmarks of a child's fairy tale. The story is about a beautiful garden enjoyed by the children until its owner, a very selfish giant, comes home and puts up a sign, "Trespassers Will Be Prosecuted." Then winter comes to the garden and remains there as long as the children are locked out. One day the giant discovers that the garden is blooming with flowers and children. He rushes out and encounters a little boy who touches the giant's hard heart. He lifts the child into a tree and bids him come daily to the garden with his little friends. From then on the garden is restored to the children, and the giant is happy, except for the absence of the strange boy. After the giant has grown old, he sees his little friend again. Hastening to the child, he discovers the prints of nails on the hands and on the little feet.

"Who hath dared to wound thee?" cried the Giant; "tell me, that I may take my big sword and slay him."



"Nay!" answered the child; "but these are the wounds of Love."

"Who art thou?" said the Giant, and a strange awe fell on him, and he knelt before the little child.

And the child smiled on the Giant, and said to him, "You let me play once in your garden; to-day you shall come with me to my garden, which is Paradise."

And when the children ran in that afternoon, they found the Giant lying dead under the tree, all covered with white blossoms.

If children understand that the Child is supposed to be Jesus, they are still baffled by this conclusion, and uncomfortable because of the mixture of religious ideas with a fairy tale. But most children miss the point entirely and find the nail prints merely confusing and irrelevant. The significance of "the wounds of Love"—that only those we love and care for can wound us deeply—is completely over the heads of children.

Almost seventy years later, in 1955, Clyde Bulla told a similar story in *The Poppy Seeds*. A suspicious old man who in an arid land kept his clear spring to himself learned that to share is to be rich. The poppy seeds that the boy Pablo had dropped in fright grew and blossomed by the spring. The moral is evident, but not underscored, and children can understand every aspect of the conflict.

This renewed simplicity is characteristic of the twentieth century. One possible explanation is that beginning in the early nineteenth hundreds there was a growing awareness of the child. G. Stanley Hall had launched a new science, *Child Study*, and the consciousness of the child as a child rather than as a small adult was penetrating the literate world. Whatever the cause, the turn of the century brought some delightful new fanciful tales for children.

**Helen Bannerman**  
*Little Black Sambo*

The first of these twentieth-century books was a small one, only about four by five and one-half inches in size, called *Little Black Sambo*. The author, Helen Bannerman, was

a Scotchwoman stationed in India. Because the climate of that country is especially trying for children, she had, like so many of her countrywomen, taken her two little daughters back to their native land to be educated. On the long return journey to India, torn by this separation from her two children, Helen Bannerman wrote and illustrated *Little Black Sambo*, partly to amuse her daughters and partly to comfort herself. It was published about 1900, caused no particular stir, and, at the time Stokes published it in the United States, was not even copyrighted. But American children took it to their hearts with a fervor and unanimity that have necessitated reprint after reprint ever since its first appearance in the United States.

This story, which might almost have come out of some folklore collection, has about it an effortless perfection which baffles analysis. Its extreme simplicity is deceiving. Just try to duplicate it! It begins by introducing Sambo and his family, one sentence and one picture to a page: "And his Mother was called Black Mumbo. And his Father was called Black Jumbo." Then the clothes appear, piece by piece: first, blue trousers; next, red coat; then, grand green umbrella; finally, the climax—"Purple Shoes with Crimson Soles and Crimson Linings." (Now those were shoes!) Sambo's walk in the jungle wearing all his "Fine Clothes" brings out the tigers, and they take Sambo's apparel away from him and wear it in amusing and ingenious ways. How Sambo gets his clothes back and eats 169 pancakes into the bargain is certainly the best substitute for getting "the princess and half the kingdom" ever invented for children. The formula is: extreme simplicity of language, short, cadenced sentences with enough repetition to give the pleasant rhythm little children enjoy, a plot full of mild and funny surprises, considerable suspense, and complete satisfaction at the end. Still, the easy charm of this unaffected, convincing little tale eludes us.

In this age of color and race consciousness, some people wish that Mrs. Bannerman had

not woven the word *black* into her repetitive cadence of colors. Indeed its use, together with the stylized pictures, has brought about the exclusion of the book from most reading lists. If *black* applied to people is a cause of grief to some of our children, then the book should be omitted from school lists. But Sambo is happy and completely triumphant, the envy of all young hero worshippers—he outwits the tigers over and over. He has the right kind of parents, just the kind every child would like to have. And in the history of children's literature *Little Black Sambo* remains an important innovation. It has theme, plot, and felicitous style. The text of the story and the pictures are perfectly synchronized. It was the first picture-story and a model for that type of literary composition.

#### Wanda Gág

Millions of Cats

Snippy and Snappy

The Funny Thing

Nothing at All

It was almost three decades after *Sambo* before the inimitable *Millions of Cats* appeared, another modern invention in folk-tale style. Wanda Gág had been brought up on the traditional tales; so she had the feeling for plot and also for the fine flowing rhythms of storytelling. This same rhythm is as characteristic of her illustrations as it is of her text and makes a strong appeal to young children. They welcomed this first story of Wanda Gág's with the same joyous approval they bestowed upon *Peter Rabbit* and *Little Black Sambo*, and already it has entered the ranks of nursery immortals.

Wanda Gág always tells a good story. *Millions of Cats* concerns a little old man and a little old woman who wanted a little cat. The old man went out to choose one, but because he could not decide which was the prettiest he came home with "hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats." Notice the walking rhythm of that refrain which goes all through the



They came to a pond.  
"Meow, meow! We are thirsty!" cried the  
Hundreds of cats,  
Thousands of cats,  
Millions and billions and trillions of cats.

story. How the jealous creatures destroyed each other and left only one scrawny little cat, too homely to be in the fight, and how the little old man and woman petted and fed the skinny little thing until it became a creature of beauty make the tale. Ah, but the text and the pictures! Up and down over curving hills and winding roads go the old man and the cats; up and down and on and on in flowing cadence go the words, telling a simple story any three-year-old can understand. There are strength and tenderness in these illustrations, simplicity and directness in the words. Together they make a picture-story so gently humorous in content, so pleasant to the eyes and the ears, so happily concluded, that adults who read it aloud and show the pictures enjoy it quite as much as the children.

*Snippy and Snappy*, *The Funny Thing*, and *Nothing at All* are all good stories in Miss Gág's own particular rhythms, and the pictures have the same deceptive simplicity found in the text. Children enjoy every one of them and should probably have them all, but *Millions of Cats* is a must. Her *ABC Bunny* (p. 550) is the ABC book of them all. Wanda Gág's death in 1946 was a grievous loss to the literature of young children.

#### Other examples

On the whole, not many stories are being written in folk-tale style today, but some

Illustration from Wanda Gág's *Millions of Cats*, Coward McCann, 1928 (book 8½ x 6¼)

*The rhythm of Wanda Gág's text, "Hundreds of cats, thousands of cats, millions and billions and trillions of cats," is reflected in the rhythmic lines of her drawings with their curving, flowing, up-and-down pattern. See also page 550.*

exceedingly good ones appear from time to time. Marjorie Flack's *Ask Mr. Bear* (p. 335) and *Seven Diving Ducks* by Margaret Friskey (p. 335) have long been popular. Will and Nicolas' *Finders Keepers*, the amusing story of two dogs that found the same bone and asked for advice to decide which should keep it, belongs to this same group of picture-stories for the youngest children.

In Richard Bennett's Irish fairy tale, *Shawneen and the Gander*,<sup>1</sup> Shawneen catches a leprechaun and gets a goose's egg. It hatches into a very demon of a gander, which is eventually the cause of Shawneen's getting

## Stories of fantasy

One of Andersen's most successful story types was the fantasy, and the most spectacular juvenile book of the nineteenth century, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, was also a fantasy. Fantasy here means a tale of magic, often beginning realistically but merging quickly into adventures strange, astonishing, and dreamlike. Andersen's stories of this type are invariably melancholy or tragic—for example, "The Marsh King's Daughter," "The Snow Queen," and "The Little Mermaid." In England, the best examples of this type of tale are exactly the reverse. Just as the humorous "Tom Tit Tot" contrasts with the somber "Rumpelstiltskin," so Alice, the English equivalent of Gerda, starts on her dreamlike adventures, not in pursuit of an icy-hearted boy but of an utterly

<sup>1</sup>Unfortunately this book is out of print at present, but the story is reprinted in *Time for Fairy Tales*.

the bugle he wants. These adventures tickle children eight to ten, the same group that delights in Dr. Seuss' *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*. In *Alphonse, That Bearded One*, Natalie Carlson tells children ten to twelve the entertaining story of a woodsman who trains a bear to drill like a soldier and take his place in the army. The situations are hilarious, with Alphonse the bear always triumphant.

These are just a few typical examples of original modern tales in traditional style which are successful with children. There are plenty of made-to-order examples available also, but these come and go in short order. Unless an author has grown up with the oral tradition of folk tales, his own stories are not likely to come out in that style. If he tries consciously to reproduce it, the results are likely to be obviously labored and made-to-order. But when an original story in folk-tale style has substance and is well written, children from the nursery to college like it as well as they like the traditional tales.

frivolous rabbit wearing a fancy waistcoat and carrying a gold watch. Before following Alice down her famous rabbit hole, let's look briefly at one of her predecessors.

### Charles Kingsley The Water-Babies

Charles Kingsley, a clergyman and a scientist, wrote a book for his own little boy which enjoyed great popularity for many years. It told the story of Tom, a poor little chimney sweep who was carried off by the fairies to the world under the waters, where he became a Water-Baby. For the most part this story makes little appeal to modern children. It is interesting historically not only because it embodies magic, but because the water creatures are true to their species. Here, perhaps, is the ancestor of the modern animal tale which permits the creatures to speak but

keeps them otherwise true to their kind (p. 464). Unfortunately, *The Water-Babies* also teaches moral lessons, and the unwieldy combination of magic, morals, and lessons in science is enough to account for its waning popularity.

#### Lewis Carroll

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland  
Through the Looking Glass

The "Alice" books cannot be accounted for on the basis of anything that had preceded them, nor does any knowledge of the author's adult life help to explain them. The comfortable, solid life of Charles Lurwidge Dodgson, author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, was as different from the tragic irregularities of Hans Andersen's as it could well be. Yet in the end both men achieved somewhat similar fame. Both loved children and were loved by them; both were bachelors; and both were disconcerted when their fame was attached not to their serious work but to their books for children. Here the likeness ends.

Dodgson's father was an Archdeacon in the Church of England. The boy enjoyed the finest possible education, first at Rugby and then at Oxford, where he took orders for the ministry. At Oxford he remained for forty-seven of his sixty-five years. There he was remembered as a dry, perfunctory lecturer in mathematics and as an early experimenter with photography. His well-composed, well-lighted photographs of famous contemporaries are now invaluable. They include not only pictures of Tennyson, Ruskin, Faraday, the Rossettis, and other celebrities but also many of little Alice Liddell, for whom he spun his story.

As a child, young Charles had complicated the family garden with an elaborate miniature railroad which he built and ran. He also launched a newspaper, wrote poems for it, and drew the illustrations. He made a puppet theater, and he kept all sorts of curious animals for pets. Indeed, it is hard to believe that this active, enterprising boy could grow up to be a sober, sedate cleric with ambitions

toward mathematical research. But this childhood may account in part for *Alice*.

Fortunately, Dr. Liddell of Christ Church, where Dodgson lectured, had three little girls called by their mathematical friend, Prima, Secunda, and Tertia. Secunda was Alice, evidently Dodgson's favorite:

Child of the pure unclouded brow  
And dreaming eyes of wonder!

So he described her, in the introductory poem to *Through the Looking Glass*. The charming photographs he has left of her bear out his description. To these little girls, Dodgson used to tell stories, teasing them by breaking off in the middle with "And that's all till next time." Whereupon "the cruel Three" would cry, "But it is the next time!"

Then came that famous summer afternoon (the fourth of July, by the way) when Dodgson rowed his little friends up the Cherwell River to Goodstow, where they had tea on the riverbank. There the young man told them the fairy tale of "Alice's Adventures Under Ground." Secunda hoped there'd be nonsense in it, and no hopes ever materialized more gloriously. The next Christmas, Dodgson wrote his story as a gift for "a dear child in memory of a Summer day." The story was exquisitely written in clear script, as legible as print, and charmingly illustrated by the author. Years later that little green volume of ninety-two pages was sold to a private collector in the United States for £15,400 or about \$77,000, "the highest price which any book has ever brought in an English auction room."

Three years after the famous picnic, the story appeared in book form, somewhat enlarged, with the new title *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and with Sir John Tenniel's matchless illustrations. That was 1865, and six years later the companion volume appeared, both books under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll. Then a strange thing happened. Charles Lurwidge Dodgson, still an obscure mathematician, found Lewis Carroll a famous person—sought after, praised, dis-

cussed, even advertised. Gentle, sensitive soul that he was, Dodgson was horrified. He announced firmly that "Mr. Dodgson neither claimed nor acknowledged any connection with the books nor published under his name." Autograph hunters hunted in vain. He wrote several more books under his pseudonym, but when Queen Victoria asked for the rest of his works, he sent her all his learned treatises on mathematics and nothing else. If the name "Lewis Carroll" was supposed to provide Charles Dodgson with a shield against publicity, it was a dismal failure. Instead, it practically obliterated the mathematician. Like Andersen's, Dodgson's declining years were serene and uneventful. Nothing else he ever wrote enjoyed the success of his two companion volumes about Alice.

### The story about Alice

Does anyone who has read the *Adventures in Wonderland* ever forget those opening paragraphs, with the child's comment on books?

Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do; once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, "and what is the use of a book," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations?"

Then plop! Right into the third short paragraph comes the White Rabbit, with waistcoat and watch. Down he goes into the rabbit hole, murmuring "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!" And down the rabbit hole after him goes Alice, "never once considering how in the world she was to get out again." From then on madness takes over.

Alice finds a little glass table on which is a tiny golden key that unlocks the door to more bewilderment. She drinks from a little bottle and shrinks to ten inches, swallows a piece of cake and finds she is "opening out like the largest telescope that ever was!" This goes on, but never by any chance is Alice the proper size for the place she is in. She nearly drowns in a lake of her own tears; she is for-

ever catching glimpses of the hurrying White Rabbit, but hurrying where? She encounters strange creatures. There is the smiling Cheshire Cat who can vanish leaving only his grin behind. There is a bad-tempered cook who douses everything with pepper and throws saucepans at the baby. There is the terrifying Duchess with the baby who turns into a pig. There is the Queen of Hearts who disposes of all who disagree with her with a simple "Off with her head!" and the Red Queen who has to run for dear life in order "to keep in the same place." All these characters talk nonsense in the gravest way. The best example is "A Mad Tea-Party" (p. 380), where the conversation reminds you uncomfortably of some of the disjointed small talk which you have not only heard but perhaps, horrid thought, even contributed to. The characters appear and disappear, behave with a kind of daft logic, and burst into verses which sing in your head in place of the serious poetry you might prefer to recall. Here are some verses from a typical poem:

#### THE WALRUS AND THE CARPENTER

The sun was shining on the sea,  
Shining with all his might:  
He did his very best to make  
The billows smooth and bright—  
And this was odd, because it was  
The middle of the night.

The moon was shining sulkily,  
Because she thought the sun  
Had got no business to be there  
After the day was done—  
"It's very rude of him," she said,  
"To come and spoil the fun!"

The sea was wet as wet could be,  
The sands were dry as dry,  
You could not see a cloud, because  
No cloud was in the sky;  
No birds were flying overhead—  
There were no birds to fly.

The Walrus and the Carpenter  
Were walking close at hand;  
They wept like anything to see  
Such quantities of sand:  
"If this were only cleared away,"  
They said, "it would be grand!"

"I didn't know it was your table," said Alice;  
"it's laid for a great many more than three."

"Your hair wants cutting," said the Hatter.  
He had been looking at Alice for some time  
with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.

"You should learn not to make personal  
remarks," Alice said with some severity: "it's  
very rude."

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on  
hearing this, but all he said was, "Why is a seven  
like a writing-desk?"



"Come, we shall have some fun now!"  
thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking  
riddles—I believe I can guess that," she added  
aloud.

"If seven maids with seven mops  
Swept it for half a year,  
Do you suppose," the Walrus said,  
"That they could get it clear?"  
"I doubt it," said the Carpenter,  
And shed a bitter tear.

There are eighteen verses of this mock tragedy  
relating how the Walrus and the Carpenter  
lured some young oysters to a "dismal" end.  
Equally delightful nonsense are "The Lobster-  
Quadrille," "Jabberwocky" (p. 110), and  
"Father William" (pp. 110-111).

#### When do children enjoy *Alice*?

These duties, which occur every few chapters,  
are memorized with ease and are popular with  
children. They represent a kind of humor  
which some people enjoy and others find hard  
to understand. Paul Hazard in *Books, Children  
and Men* says of the English people and  
*Alice*:

The English are a calm and cold people. But  
let them relax, for a single day, that compulsion  
for self-control which governs them and they

(Illustration by Sir John Tenniel for *Alice in Wonderland*  
by Lewis Carroll, Peter Pauper Press, 1941  
(original in two colors, book 5 3/4 x 8 3/4))

Here is pictured one of the most famous tea parties  
of all time. Tenniel's picture is as much a  
classic as the affair itself; the Dormouse sleeps;  
the Hatter spouts nonsense; the Rabbit listens  
wild-eyed; and poor little Alice is lost in gloom.

will show a capacity for boisterous unrestraint  
that is surprising. . . . It is the same with  
laughter. When they enjoy looking at the uni-  
verse on its fantastic side, distorting it with  
deforming mirrors, there is no stopping them.  
. . . A foreigner can try to understand *Alice*  
in *Wonderland*; but to appreciate fully this mar-  
velous story one must be English. (p. 140)

This last statement should be qualified by  
adding, "or American." For many Americans  
revel in the book. The puzzling question is  
when do children enjoy *Alice*? Needless to  
say, it should never be required reading. In  
the first place, some children heartily dislike  
fantasy and to make them read *Alice* would  
be turning reading into a penalty instead of  
a delight. In the second place, Alice was in-  
tended to be a light-hearted excursion into  
nonsense. If for certain children it rouses no  
laughter, it is worse than useless for them.  
When college students are asked what books  
they remember enjoying as children there is  
more disagreement over *Alice* than over any  
other book. Some disliked it heartily or were  
bored by it; some say *Alice* was one of their  
favorite books, not as children but at the  
high-school age. This is perhaps where it  
really belongs. Most of those who liked *Alice*  
as children, ten or under, had heard it read  
aloud by adults who enjoyed it. Those who  
had to read the book for themselves rarely  
found it funny until they were older. Here  
are some clues. Try reading *Alice* aloud to the  
children if you yourself like it. If the story  
captures their interest, keep on; if it rouses  
no enthusiasm, put it away until later. But  
somewhere, sometime, children should be ex-

posed to this fantasy and allowed to accept it joyously or reject it without apologies. For most of them this first English masterpiece for children, this crowning nonsense fantasy of them all, will give genuine and lasting entertainment.

### Illustrations by Sir John Tenniel

Sir John Tenniel in his illustrations for *Alice* has fixed forever the face, figure, and dress of this beloved little girl. Long straight hair, a grave, prim face, a neat, perky dress covered with a pinafore, and the straight, slim legs clad in horizontally striped stockings make an appealing little figure which no one ever forgets. This is Alice, the Alice who remains impeccably Alice even when her neck has grown as long as a giraffe's. The Tenniel rabbit is an equally unforgettable figure with his sporty tweed coat, his massive gold watch and chain, his swagger walking stick, just the kind of fellow who *would* keep the Duchess waiting. For Tenniel does not merely illustrate. He interprets, giving the mood and the manner of the creature as well as his outer appearance. The Duchess and the Red Queen wear the habiliments of nobility, but they are ferocious looking. The Mock Turtle is shedding tears all right, but you don't trust him; and the funny daftness of the Mad Hatter's appearance puts you in the mood for his conversation.

You also have to admire the remarkable technique of these pictures. Tenniel draws Alice stepping through the looking glass, with curious and plausible ease, half of her on one side, half on the other. The Cheshire Cat disappearing, leaving only his grin behind, and the playing-card and chess people are only a few of his pen-and-ink wonders. These sketches are so alive, so profoundly interpretative that no one has ever wished for colored illustrations of Alice, at least not until Leonard Weisgard created them color-drenched and beautiful. But certainly no artist has illustrated Alice with greater magic than Tenniel. If possible, let children's first experience with Alice include the

drawings of her first illustrator, Sir John Tenniel, most excellent interpreter of Wonderland.

### George MacDonald

#### At the Back of the North Wind

George MacDonald was a personal friend of Charles Dodgson, and *Alice* was read to the MacDonald children when it was still in manuscript form. However, when MacDonald began to write fairy tales himself, he turned back to the more serious vein of Hans Christian Andersen. Indeed his first book, *At the Back of the North Wind*, is reminiscent of "The Snow Queen." This story of Diamond's adventures is a long one, carrying the little boy through thirty-eight adventures (chapters), some with the North Wind herself, some with his flesh-and-blood friends or foes. The North Wind first comes to Diamond in his hayloft bed. She carries him out into the night, teaches him to follow her through the air and to go from his dream life with her to play a brave part in his difficult everyday life. This continual change from fantasy to reality and back again to fantasy confuses many children. Some like the North Wind parts of the story, but others prefer the earthly adventures of the boy.

Diamond is an appealing little figure when he is not being too angelic. His flesh-and-blood adventures are often as incredible as those with the North Wind: he reforms a drunkard, rescues a street sweeper from slavery to an infamous old woman, drives his father's cab through the London streets, and generally guides and improves all the adults with whom he comes in contact. Despite the impossibly moralistic side of the book, many of the chapters tell an imaginative and thrilling story. The chapter that tells how the real Diamond was seriously ill and the other Diamond miraculously passed through the North Wind herself and came to the country which lies at her back is a beautifully related bit of mysticism implying, perhaps, death. It is one of the most moving episodes in the book. Probably few children ever catch this hint

meaning, but whether they do or don't, the chapter is reassuring.

The other MacDonald books, like this one, seem overlong. *The Princess and the Goblin* and *The Princess and Curdie* present interminable adventures above and below ground with cobs and humans and with considerable gentle moralizing into the bargain. The books are well written and have a strong imaginative appeal, but because of their length and complexity they are enjoyed today only by the exceptional child.

**James Barrie**  
**Peter Pan**

Of all Sir James Barrie's delightful plays and books, none has been so beloved as *Peter Pan* (1911). Exquisitely performed by Maude Adams at the beginning of the century, it was as popular with adults as with children. The book *Peter and Wendy* was made from the play, but was never so successful, probably because the writing was too subtle for the average child. The play made dramatically clear the story of Peter Pan, the boy who will not grow up; Tinker Bell, the fairy who loses her shadow; and the three children—Wendy, John, and Michael—who go off with Peter Pan to Never Never Land. Their adventures with pirates, redskins, and a ticking crocodile are exciting, but in the end they return to their parents to begin the serious business of growing up. Peter Pan is left alone with Tink, whose life is in danger. Only one thing will save her, and so Peter calls through the dusk to all children, "Do you believe in fairies?" Always, at this point in the play, a great cry would go up from the audience, "I do!" "I do!"—the children's testimony of faith!

Today *Peter Pan* has been so sparkled up with music, ballet, Mr. Disney's inventions, and popular stars that its author would hardly know it. Fortunately, in 1950 Scribner published a new edition of the book, calling it *Peter Pan*. Nora Unwin's lovely pictures recreate some of the old magic of Sir James Barrie's wistful story.

**C. S. Lewis**

**The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe**

British authors have always had a way with fantasy, and in the midst of serious work distinguished literary figures like C. S. Lewis have stopped to write books for children. Well known as a theologian, poet, and author, he has created for children a strange new world—Narnia—which they first enter through an old wardrobe. *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (1950) is the first of a series of books about the adventures of four children. Narnia is no Utopia. In fact, once the children have become kings and queens of Narnia, they find themselves engaged in the endless conflict between good and evil symbolized by the benignant Lion and the malicious Witch. After reigning for many years, the children return to their own world, only to find that they have not even been missed.

*Prince Caspian* carries the children back to Narnia for further adventures. *The Magician's Nephew* goes back to the creation of Narnia by the Lion. When the Lion sings into existence the world, the stars, the land, and then the creatures, the sheer goodness of creation is too much for the Witch. She flees, but the reader knows she will return. *The Last Battle* concludes the series. As the title implies, the loyal followers of the king of Narnia are making their last stand against the forces of evil which seek to destroy the noble Lion Aslan and the world he has created. Another theologian, Chad Walsh, considers this the best of the series, a book full of Christian symbolism, and a "deeply moving and hauntingly lovely story apart from its doctrinal content." Children never suspect the doctrine, but a world of good and evil seems strangely like their own.

**Mary Norton**

**The Borrowers**

In 1943 a book called *The Magic Bed-knob* appeared. It caused no great stir, but was well liked by children who encountered it. Then



in 1953 came *The Borrowers* by the same author, Mary Norton. Most reviewers agreed that here was a treasure of lasting value. As British as tea for breakfast, but with action, suspense, and characters of universal appeal, it was immediately popular.

Borrowers are not fairies but small creatures who live in old houses and take their names from the places they inhabit—the Overmantels, for instance, the Harpsichords, and the Clocks, who live under a huge old grandfather's clock in the hall. Homily, Pod, and their daughter Arrietty Clock are the only surviving family of Borrowers in the old house. When a Borrower is *seen*, there is nothing for him to do but emigrate. Only Pod, climbing curtains with the aid of his trusty hatpin, borrowing a useful spool now and then or a bit of tea or a portrait stamp of the Queen, only Pod has escaped detection. Arrietty is the problem now. Arrietty wants to see the world and she goes exploring, happily and trustingly even after the boy sees her. They become fast friends, but even the boy cannot prevent the tragic ending. It was so catastrophic that children could not accept it as final. There had to be a sequel, and so we follow the fortunes of *The Borrowers Afraid*.

Out of their comfortable home, with no conveniences, no proper food, with only a leaky old boot to shelter them, and with beasts to threaten them, the future looks dark. But Pod works manfully, Homily makes do, and Arrietty dances right into another adventure.

No briefing of these stories can give any conception of their quality. Every character is unforgettably portrayed. There is poor Homily with her hair forever awry, loving but a chronic worrier, "taking on" first and then going capably to work. Pod is the sober realist, a philosopher and a brave one. Arrietty is youth and adventure, springtime and hope, too much in love with life to be afraid, even of those mammoth "human beans." To read these books aloud is to taste the full richness of their humor and good writing. Chil-

dren read and reread them and presently, in classrooms, homes, and camps, their versions of a Borrower's house begin to grow. None is ever as clever as Pod's under-clock domain, but each one, done with loving inventiveness, is a tribute to Pod, Homily, Arrietty, and Mary Norton.

Other books of fantasy distinguished by their excellent writing and convincing reality have come to us from England. English fantasy often has more whimsy, more adult overtones, and more humor than American fantasy. And for sheer storytelling enchantment, the best of these English books are hard to match.

#### Carolyn Sherwin Bailey Miss Hickory

Fantasy in the United States exemplifies a statement of May Massee's: "The right story of fantasy has its feet on the ground."<sup>1</sup> How right she is. The more real and usual the setting and the people, the more reasonable and convincing the particular variety of Never Never Land to which the story leads us. A New England apple orchard is the home of the heroine of *Miss Hickory* (1946), a mere twig, mind you, but with a hickory nut head and personality plus. Learning that she had won the Newbery Medal would never have fazed her.

She begins as an apple-tree doll, left behind by the children. Waspish but sound as a nut, Miss Hickory rises to the challenge of adversity and with Crow's help makes a home for herself in a robin's nest. She gets on surprisingly well with the creatures and the country. But then apple trees are part of her being, as the conclusion of the story proves. It is a strange ending, for a squirrel bites off her head. Then he is frightened out of his wits when he sees the twig that was Miss Hickory walk away, headless but serene. She becomes the graft on an old apple tree that gives it new life. This conclusion leaves children baffled. Perhaps a few of them get the

<sup>1</sup>Bertha Mahony Miller and Elinor Whitney Field, eds., *Newbery Medal Books: 1922-1955*, p. 297.

## Modern stories of talking beasts

The talking beasts in the old tales were, on the whole, a cheerful lot. Silly creatures were liquidated, but the wise pig survived, and smart billy-goats gained the grassy hill-side in spite of the troll. There were no brooding and no melancholy until Andersen's *Fairy Tales*. The Ugly Duckling not only was mistreated by others but suffered spiritually. In the two English talking-beast masterpieces, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* and *The Wind in the Willows*, there are also animals with limitations, who make mistakes and commit follies but who shake them off with blithe determination. It is these lively tales free from introspection and melancholy rather than "The Ugly Duckling" which have set the pattern for recent beast tales.

### Beatrix Potter The Tale of Peter Rabbit

Beatrix Potter, English novelist of the nursery and cheerful interpreter of small animals to small children, has left her own account of how she happened to write her classic, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. In a letter to *The Horn Book*, May 1929, she said:

... About 1893 I was interested in a little invalid child. . . . I used to write letters with pen and ink scribbles, and one of the letters was Peter Rabbit.

Noel has got them yet; he grew up and became a hard-working clergyman in a London poor parish. After a time there began to be a vogue for small books, and I thought "Peter" might do as well as some that were being published. But I did not find any publisher who agreed with me. The manuscript—nearly word for word the same, but with only outline illustrations—was returned with or without thanks by at least six firms. Then I drew my savings out of the post office savings bank, and got an edition of 450 copies printed. I think the engraving and printing cost me about £11. It caused a good deal of amusement amongst my

relations and friends. I made about £12 or £14 by selling copies to obliging aunts. I showed this privately printed black and white book to Messrs. F. Warne & Co., and the following year, 1901, they brought out the first coloured edition.

Commenting on her method of writing, Miss Potter adds:

My usual way of writing is to scribble, and cut out, and write it again and again. The shorter and plainer the better. And read the Bible (*unrevised* version and Old Testament) if I feel my style wants chastening.

These apparently simple little stories<sup>1</sup> of Beatrix Potter's the children learn by heart in no time, and how they relish the names of her characters: Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail, Jemima Puddle-Duck, Pigling Bland, Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle, Benjamin Bunny, Peter Rabbit. The stories are invariably built on the never-fail formula of a beginning, a middle, and an end, with plenty of suspense to bring sighs of relief when the conclusion is finally reached. Children chuckle over the funny characters, the absurd predicaments, and the narrow escapes. They pore over the clear water-color illustrations, which are full of action. Even at four they absorb delightedly the lovely details of landscape, old houses, fine old furniture and china, and at forty, learn why they liked them.

If you were to play one of those wretched games in which you can choose only two books for a five-year-old marooned on a desert island, you would feel obliged to choose *Mother Goose* and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*. These are the child's favorites. Peter's adventures he can soon "read" for himself, he knows them so well; but the charms of that

<sup>1</sup>Among the companion volumes to *Peter Rabbit* are *The Tale of Benjamin Bunny*, *The Tailor of Gloucester*, *The Tale of Squirrel Nutkin*, *The Tale of Jemima Puddle-Duck*, *The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle*, and *The Tale of Tom Kitten*.

humorous and exciting plot never grow stale; disobedient Peter in Mr. MacGregor's cabbage patch, very complacent at first, then pursued and thoroughly frightened but still keeping his wits about him; then Peter hiding in the watering can, and, finally, Peter at home, properly repentant, chastened by his mother, but snug in bed at last and secure. Here is a cheerful Prodigal Son, child-size.

When Beatrix Potter died in December 1943, such papers as the London *Times* and the New York *Herald Tribune* praised the reality of the little world she had brought so vividly to life and praised her excellent prose. Certainly the children for whom her little books provide an introduction to the world of animals are never going to see a rabbit skipping hurriedly out of their gardens without amusement and sympathy, for children who have known Beatrix Potter's books know this world of timid, scampering creatures as a world touchingly like their own.

#### Kenneth Grahame

##### *The Wind in the Willows*

Another pleasant thing about Peter Rabbit is that he paves the way for *The Wind in the Willows*. Children who loved Peter are more likely to adopt Mole and Rat and Toad a few years later.

Kenneth Grahame was a lovable, literary, out-of-doorish sort of Englishman with a gift for storytelling. For his small son, nicknamed "Mouse," he used to spin continuous tales at bedtime. Once Mouse refused to go to the seaside because his trip would interrupt the adventures of Toad to which he was listening. In order to persuade the child to go, his father promised to send him a chapter in the mail

daily, and this he did. Sensing their value, the nursery governess who read the chapters to Mouse mailed them back to Mrs. Grahame for safekeeping. From these letters and bedtime stories grew *The Wind in the Willows*.

Each chapter tells a complete adventure of the four friends, Mole, kindly old Water Rat, shy Badger, and rich, conceited, troublesome Toad. The friends "mess around in boats," have picnics, dine elegantly at Toad Hall, get lost in the Wild Wood, rescue Toad from his life of folly, and even encounter once "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn." But how explain the appeal of this book? Of course, not all children like it, but those who do are likely to value it above most other books. One boy, faced each summer with the problem of choosing one book to take with him to camp, has taken *The Wind in the Willows* four consecutive seasons. Why?

#### Sensory appeal

In the first place, the sensory experiences make the reader one with Mole or Ratty. You can just feel the sunshine hot on your fur;

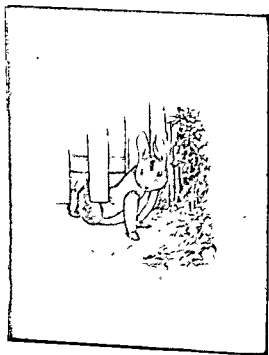


Illustration from Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*,  
Warne (original in color, book 3½ x 5¼)

Beatrix Potter's delicate water-color sketches of Peter Rabbit and all his furry and feathered successors add much interest to her little stories. Her figures are well drawn and the glimpses of English countryside are delightful.

you, too, waggle your toes from sheer happiness or stretch out on some cool dock leaves or explore the silent silver kingdom of the moonlit river. Earth and water, a green world of woods and meadows, speak to you from every page. There are also the most succulent foods in this book. The friends are forever dining, or supping, or breakfasting, or taking tea. They feast on rich flavorful stews, rashers of bacon, plates of fried ham, potted lobster, or tea with hot toast that is dripping with butter. You find your mouth watering and your appetite rising. Sights, sounds, tastes, feels, smells—a rich sensory world!

### **Humor**

The humor of *The Wind in the Willows*, particularly the humor of the conversations, is a little subtle for the average child but especially delights the children who do catch it. Fortunately, Toad's antics, his bemused pursuit of his latest fad (p. 385), his ridiculous conceit, the scrapes he gets into, and the efforts of his friends to reform him furnish enough broad comedy to satisfy everyone.

### **Conversations**

Children invariably flip over the pages of a strange book to see if it has enough conversation to suit them. So they enjoy Mole, Rat, Badger, and Toad, for the friends talk continually. The dialogue is so easy and natural you might know that it grew not from written but from oral composition. It is that of the born storyteller, used to children's predilection for talk, improvising dialogue in his own fluent, individual vein. What talk it is—funniest when it is most grave, revealing more of the speaker than any explanatory paragraph.

For example, Toad, having dragged his friends Rat and Mole on an uncomfortable journey across the country in a cart, remarks fatuously:

"... This is the real life for a gentleman! Talk about your old river!"

"I don't talk about my river," replied the patient Rat. "You know I don't, Toad. But I

think about it," he added pathetically, in a lower tone: "I think about it—all the time!"

The Mole reached out from under his blanket, felt for the Rat's paw in the darkness, and gave it a squeeze. "I'll do whatever you like, Ratty," he whispered. "Shall we run away to-morrow morning, quite early—very early—and go back to our dear old hole on the river?"

"No, no, we'll see it out," whispered back the Rat. "Thanks awfully, but I ought to stick by Toad till this trip is ended. It wouldn't be safe for him to be left to himself. It won't take very long. His fads never do. Good night!"

No preaching about the duties of a friend, just patient, enduring friendship, loyal in service and understanding!

### **Descriptions**

These conversations are as much a part of the style as the descriptions which make the book one of the masterpieces of English for readers of any age. The famous chapter in which Rat and Toad meet "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn" is shot through with descriptions that for simplicity and beauty cannot be surpassed. After the black darkness of the river at night the friends see the moon rise:

*The line of the horizon was clear and hard against the sky, and in one particular quarter it showed black against a silvery climbing phosphorescence that grew and grew. At last, over the rim of the waiting earth the moon lifted with slow majesty till it swung clear of the horizon and rode off, free of moorings; and once more they began to see surfaces—meadows widespread, and quiet gardens, and the river itself from bank to bank, all softly disclosed, all washed clean of mystery and terror, all radiant again as by day, but with a difference that was tremendous. Their old haunts greeted them again in other raiment, as if they had slipped away and put on this pure new apparel and come quietly back, smiling as they shyly waited to see if they would be recognized again under it.*

The dawn comes with equal beauty and strangeness. City children may never have seen such beauty, but to hear this prose is to hear beauty. As the river was "gemmed" with

flowers, so this book is "gemmed" with effortless, flawless description.

### Inner significance

None of these things—sensory appeal, humor, dialogue, or descriptions—accounts for the hold this book takes upon the heart and the imagination. As in Andersen's *Fairy Tales*, it is the inner significance of the story that counts. First of all, there is the warm friendliness of the animals. Each one makes mistakes, has his limitations, but no one ever rejects a friend. The three put up with Toad's escapades as long as they can; then they join together and reform him in spite of himself. Together they endure perils and pitfalls and come safely through only because they help each other. This continual kindness, the overlooking of other people's mistakes, and the sympathetic understanding which pervade every page warm the reader's heart. No allegory here, just decent people who happen to wear tails and fur treating each other with decent kindness. The book also gives the reader a heartening sense of sanctuary. Mole gets lost in the Wild Wood, frighteningly lost and hurt, but Ratty comes to his rescue. Then just as the two of them despair of reaching home before the cold overcomes them, they find Badger's house. Good old Badger takes them in, warms them beside his roaring fire, clothes them, and feeds them sumptuously; their sense of peace and security is restored. So it is with the rescue of the lost Otter baby in "The Piper at the Gates of Dawn."

This is a warm book, a book to read when the heart is chilled or the spirit shaken. It is one of the most reassuring and comforting books in all literature.

Why did Kenneth Grahame write only this one story for children? Talking to an American admirer, he said:

I am not a professional writer. I never have been, and I never will be, by reason of the accident that I don't need any money. I do not

care for notoriety: in fact, it is distasteful to me. . . .

What, then, is the use of writing for a person like myself? . . . A large amount of what Thoreau called life went into the making of many of those playful pages. To toil at making sentences means to sit indoors for many hours, cramped above a desk. Yet, out of doors, the wind may be singing through the willows, and my favourite sow may be preparing to deliver a large litter in the fullness of the moon.<sup>2</sup>

So he left children only one book, a little masterpiece, and the American admirer and critic said of him when he died:

And yet it is a truth that, on that day, the translators of the King James version of the Bible, seated at an eternal council-table, admitted to their fellowship the last great master of English prose. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Not all children like this book, but most of them do if it is read aloud to them as it was told to Mouse, a chapter at a time. For this is decidedly a book to be shared. Its richness grows when it is mulled over, discussed, and savored to the full. If a child likes it, then it is one book he ought to own—in his favorite edition, illustrated by Arthur Rackham, or Ernest Shepard, or Paul Bransom, or whichever artist he prefers. Certainly, if *The Wind in the Willows* is enjoyed in childhood, it will be reread when the child is grown-up, and it will be passed on to his children as a precious inheritance.

### Hugh Lofting

#### The Story of Dr. Dolittle

Hugh Lofting's *The Story of Dr. Dolittle* is a favorite, too, but it is as unlike Kenneth Grahame's masterpiece as it could well be. If Mole and Ratty are a little on the highbrow side, certainly Polynesia, Gub-Gub, and their friends are distinctly lowbrow. If the former are witty and urbane, the latter are downright ridiculous. Dr. Dolittle is the center of an animal saga which is hilarious

<sup>1</sup>He also wrote *Dream Days* and *The Golden Age*, which were about children.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted by Elspeth Grahame, in *First Whisper of "The Wind in the Willows"*, pp. 31-32, from an article by Clayton Hamilton in *The Bookman*, January 1933.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 33.

and unique, and it is a rare child who does not enjoy the Doctor.

World War I produced him, Hugh Lofting tells us. He says there was little news at the front suitable to write his children, and so he had to make up something or not write at all. He was continually concerned with the animals forced into the war and suffering fear, wounds, and death without ever being able to speak for themselves. Obviously, to take care of horses properly, a doctor ought to understand horse language, Mr. Lofting thought, and such a character, Dr. Dolittle, began to grow in his letters to his children. After the war, the book was made from the letters and illustrated by the author. Other Dolittle adventures followed, and the whole series has continued to make a wide appeal to children ten or twelve years old.

Dr. John Dolittle of Puddleby-on-the-Marsh gave up doctoring "the best people" and became a doctor of animals. Polynesia, the parrot, suggested that if Dolittle would really settle down to learn animal languages, which she could teach him, he might become an animal doctor of some account. The good doctor went to work immediately and soon discovered how right Polynesia had been. His first patient was a horse who told him in good strong horse terms that a stupid man had been treating him for spavins when all he needed was glasses. Dr. Dolittle fitted him with a splendid pair of glasses and from then on the Doctor's fame as a physician who could converse with his animal patients spread like wildfire and carried him into adventures which fill some eight books. These adventures are wildly impossible and very funny.

The charm of these books lies partly in the humorous reversal of rôles—the animals, guiding, assisting, and generally taking care of the helpless human beings—and partly in the characterizations of both animals and people. The animals are amusingly individual, and the lovable Doctor no child ever forgets. He blunders; he goes trustingly ahead doing the next thing that needs to be done regard-

less of the consequences. Hugh Lofting also has a sly way of relating utterly preposterous events with a complete gravity that makes the rare "pushmi-pullyu" as plausible as a panda. This pseudo-serious style strikes children as exceedingly funny. Adults today are disturbed by the racial epithets and incidents that occur in some of the books, particularly the first one. These could be so easily deleted that it seems a pity not to edit the books and remove the offending sections. Although these stories lack literary distinction, there is a grave logic about them and a straight-faced humor that appeal to large numbers of children.

### Walter de la Mare

#### The Three Royal Monkeys

It is difficult to classify *The Three Royal Monkeys* of Walter de la Mare. It could be called animal fantasy, but since it seems a not-too-distant relative of "The Ugly Duckling," it is grouped here with the other talking beasts. It has the same curious blend of realism and fantasy that characterizes the poet's novel, *Memoirs of a Midget*. Fantasy so grave and so convincing that it seems to exist is a characteristic of Walter de la Mare's verse as well as of his prose, and is bewildering to some readers.

*The Three Royal Monkeys* is a long story dealing with the adventures of three little monkeys, or Mulgars, of the Blood Royal who go in search of their father, a prince from the Valley of Tishnar. Tishnar stands for hope and beauty and peace beyond our world. Little Nod, the youngest of the royal monkeys, is a Nizza-neela; that is, he has magic about him, and he carries besides the Wonderstone which marks him as a true prince. The brothers suffer endless hardships, but always their bravery and Nod's magic bring them through. They know that they have reached their father's land of Tishnar when they suddenly meet "a Mulgar of a presence and a strangeness, who was without doubt of the Kingdom of Assasimmon."

The book is full of wise sayings. The un-



Little George lay back in the warm grass and sang his song—

New Folks coming, Oh my!  
New Folks coming, Oh my!  
New Folks coming, Oh my!  
Oh my! Oh my!

There weren't many words and there weren't many notes  
and the notes just went up a little and down a little and  
ended where they began. Lots of people might have  
[45]

Illustration from Robert Lawson's *Rabbit Hill*, Viking, 1945  
(book 6 x 9½)

*This picture is a beguiling contrast to Mr. Lawson's drawings of Little George's wild leaping. The gentle landscape, floating clouds, the completely relaxed George—all suggest peace and contentment.*

happy panther, dressed in man's clothes, is asked if she is comfortable and replies:

"O my friend, my scarce wise Mulgar-royal, when did you ever hear that grand clothes were comfortable?"

Later, Nod remarks philosophically,

"Who is there wise that was not once foolish?"

But it is the descriptions that give it a strange eerie beauty unlike any other:

Over the swamp stood a shaving of moon, clear as a bow of silver. And all about, on every twig, on every thorn, and leaf, and pebble; all along the nine-foot grasses, on every cushion and touch of bark, even on the walls of their hut, lay this spangling fiery meal of Tishnar-frost.

Comparatively few youngsters—probably none under twelve—will read this long story for themselves. But those who have the capacity to enjoy such a book will discover that when a poet sets himself to telling a fairy tale, the result is a strange and heady enchantment.

### Marie Hall Ets Mister Penny

The hero of *Mister Penny* (1935) has to work hard in the factory of Friend-in-Need Safety-Pins in order to support his family of lazy, good-for-nothing animals. He loves them all—Limp the horse, Mooloo the cow with beautiful eyes, Splop the goat, Pugwug the pig, Mimkin the lamb, Chukluk and Doody the hen and rooster. Yet the varmints do nothing to assist Mr. Penny. Instead, they get into the most expensive kind of mischief. Finally, when they destroy the rich neighbor's garden, old Thunderstorm delivers his frightful ultimatum. He'll take the worthless animals unless his garden is completely restored. The animals decide that even work is preferable to falling into the hands of old Thunderstorm. So they firmly resolve to work! A completely black page bears the caption "Here they are working in the neighbor's garden"—at night. Before the time limit elapses they have not only completely restored old Thunderstorm's garden, but they have become so enthusiastic over their labors that they go right on and make a splendid garden for Mr. Penny, too.

The story ends on a note of triumph. Mister Penny is out of the Friend-in-Need factory forever. He is installed in a fine new house, too, which everyone comes to look at because, besides climbing roses and a superb garden, the pink house boasts a separate door

for each one of the animals and one for Mr. Penny—seven doors in all. The villagers think it a little queer, but they have to admit "They're the happiest family in Wuddle." This little fable about the satisfaction that comes from working and helping is delightfully humorous.

In similar vein is her story of the animals who saved the hero of *Mr. T. W. Anthony Woo* from the interference of a meddlesome sister. In *the Forest* and *Another Day* are slight but charming stories for the nursery child, for whom Mrs. Ets is writing and illustrating some beautiful books. Her talking beasts have been admirable, and in *Play with Me* they have ceased to talk and are equally effective.

**Robert Lawson**

*Ben and Me*  
*Rabbit Hill*

Robert Lawson, with his easy storytelling style and beautiful illustrations, has added much to the glory of the talking-beast tale. The children consider *Ben and Me* (1939) one of the genuinely "funny books." These biographical memoirs of Benjamin Franklin are supposedly written by Amos, a cheeky mouse who modestly admits that he supplied Ben with most of his ideas. Take that little matter of the stove, for instance. They were almost frozen and Ben had a bad case of sniffles when Amos thought out the idea of a stove. Ben was a little slow at catching on but finally worked out a very satisfactory contraption. Amos admits that he thoroughly disapproved of Ben's experiments with electricity, but he stuck by his friend in spite of many a shock and some novel results caused by Amos' interference. The mouse, tucked snugly away in the famous fur cap, appeared at the French court with Ben. What Amos did there is too fearful to relate.

A series of these fantastic biographies followed, of which the best one by far is *Mr. Revere and I*. Notice the improved English over *Ben and Me*. That is because Paul Revere's story is told by a cultured English

horse who loathed the "American peasants" when he first landed in Boston. But after he falls into Revere's hands, he becomes an ardent patriot. He even carries Revere on his fateful ride in spite of the silversmith's atrocious horsemanship. It is quite possible that children will get as much from this picture of the American Revolution as from some of their histories.

Good as these humorous biographies are, Mr. Lawson really came into his own as a creative writer with *Rabbit Hill* (1944), a Newbery Medal winner. This is the story of Father and Mother Rabbit, their high-leaping son, Little Georgie, and an aged Uncle Analdas, who are the leading characters, with Willie Fieldmouse and Porkey the Woodchuck playing important parts. The story begins with the pleasant rumor that new folks are moving into the big house. The question is, what kind of folks will they turn out to be—mean and pinching, or planting folks with a thought for the small creatures who have always lived on the hill. The new folks begin well with a sign "Please Drive Carefully on Account of Small Animals." They plant gardens without fences, sow fields without traps, provide generous "garbidge," and permit no poison. They rescue little Willie from drowning and Little Georgie from an automobile accident. Their crowning beneficence is a beautiful pool and feeding station for their furry and feathered friends, presided over by the good St. Francis—a little sanctuary which bears the kindly legend, "There is enough for all."

*The Tough Winter* (1954) is the sequel to *Rabbit Hill*. It tells a moving story of what happens to small beasts when snow and ice last too long and there are no kind-hearted human beings to help them. If ever there was a plea for first aid to winterbound beasts, it is this beguiling story.

These books may not have the superlative literary qualities of *The Wind in the Willows*, but they are exceedingly well written and marvelously illustrated. All of the animals, from suspicious Uncle Analdas to worrying



Mother Rabbit, are delightfully individualized. Their precarious lives, their small needs, and their many hardships are sympathetically related, and the happy conclusions are not too idealistic, as anyone can testify who has harbored wild creatures. These stories and their illustrations should do more than any lectures to develop in young children a feeling of tenderness and regard for small animals.

#### Robert Lawson's illustrations

To fully appreciate the range and power in Mr. Lawson's pictures of animals, you will need to examine all of his illustrated books. *Rabbit Hill*, which is also the name of his own country home, is a pleasant assembling of all the small creatures he has watched and recorded with humorous understanding in his own books as well as those by other authors which he has illustrated. Even in *Pilgrim's Progress* they bob up gaily. Mr. Lawson evidently enjoys mice, because not only is little Willie engagingly recorded in *Rabbit Hill*, but the redoubtable Amos in *Ben and Me* is a very prince of mice and as chummily convincing as Ferdinand, the languishing bull. Mr. Lawson's illustrations show his creatures, not as types, but as individuals in varying moods. In *Rabbit Hill*, Porkey's out-thrust, drooping lower lip is stubbornness personified; Georgie, leaping with a powerful push from those hind legs of his, is very different from the relaxed Georgie, hands folded over his fat paunch, making up his happy chant about "New Folks coming, Oh my!" In any group of the animals you can pick out Father, the bluegrass gentleman of the old school, and Uncle Analdas, the agitator.

Because Mr. Lawson draws with exquisite detail and complete clarity, he is sometimes characterized as old fashioned. But Helen Dean Fish tells of another appraisal of Robert Lawson by a small boy who was looking at an exhibit of contemporary illustrations. He said, "I like *his* best. He draws them up neat, and you can see what they mean."<sup>1</sup> So you can, and there is meaning in every line and a humor that will set you to chuckling.

#### E. B. White Charlotte's Web

Mr. White, essayist and editorial writer for *The New Yorker*, noted for his lucid, effortless prose, wrote *Stuart Little*, the story of a baby who resembled a mouse, "in fact he was a mouse." Some children liked Stuart's adventures, but most adults were disturbed by the biology of this mouse-child of a human family. *Charlotte's Web* (1952), on the other hand, had the distinction of being enthusiastically reviewed in both the adult and children's sections of our most important literary magazines. It is a delight to read aloud and children of all ages enjoy it.

Fern, a farmer's child, persuades her father to give her a runt of a pig he is about to liquidate. "Wilbur," Fern names her pet, and raises him in a doll buggy with a doll's nursing bottle for a feeder. But when Wilbur gains girth, father firmly banishes him to the barnyard, and here the fantasy begins. Fern spends long periods of time with her pet daily and discovers that she understands what the animals are saying to each other. Wilbur has learned about the fall butchering and he doesn't want to die. Charlotte, the aloof, intelligent spider, feels sorry for the silly little pig and promises to save him. Her devices for doing this are unique and exceedingly funny in their results. The progress of Wilbur, the "radiant pig," involves all the people on two farms and most of the barnyard creatures, including Templeton, the selfish rat. In the end, Wilbur is saved but Charlotte dies, true to her kind, leaving hundreds of eggs. Birth and death, and life goes on in its strange and moving cycles of change!

Children laugh hilariously over this story but they weep at its conclusion, even the ten-year-olds. Said one seven-year-old whose grandmother had read him the book, "Mother, Charlotte died."

And his mother, not knowing about Charlotte, replied casually, "Oh, did she?"

<sup>1</sup>Helen Dean Fish, Robert Lawson, "The Horn Book, January-February 1940, p. 20.

Shocked, the boy cried, "Mother, don't you care?" and burst into tears.

A book that can so delight and so move children carries with it the therapy of laughter and a growing compassion as well.

### Other examples of talking beasts

There have been an enormous number of talking-beast stories for two- to six-year-old children in the last two decades. All sorts of creatures, from pandas to goldfish, are talking and adventuring. Many of these tales are thin in content and undistinguished in style, but some are delightful. Margaret Friskey's *Seven Diving Ducks*, a story of the one little duck who was afraid to take the plunge, is worn out with rereadings. Perhaps the gayest of these stories is Margaret Wise Brown's *The Runaway Bunny*. In this brightly colored picture-story, a young bunny warns his mother that he is going to run away:

"If you run away," said his mother, "I will run after you. For you are my little bunny."

"If you run after me," said the little bunny, "I will become a fish in a trout stream and I will swim away from you."

"If you become a fish in a trout stream," said his mother, "I will become a fisherman and I will fish for you."

So they play the game of make-believe, and Clement Hurd's pictures show the bunny as a little fish with his mother as a fisherman,

or the bunny as a bird with his mother as a big rabbit-shaped tree. The word-pattern goes on like a song until it ends reassuringly:

"Shucks," said the bunny, "I might just as well stay where I am and be your little bunny."  
And so he did.

Marjorie Flack's *Ask Mr. Bear* is the nursery-school and kindergarten favorite. A small boy, not knowing what to give his mother for a birthday present, asks a series of animals for advice. Finally Mr. Bear whispers just the right thing in his ear. He hurries home and gives his mother—a great big Bear Hug. The surprise ending never fails to bring pleasure no matter how many times the children have heard it.

*The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes* is a choice Easter rabbit story by Du Bose Heyward. More recently, Roger Duvoisin has written and illustrated a droll series about Petunia, a genius of a goose, whose predicaments delight her young followers. Hans Fischer, a German artist, has added two distinguished picture-stories to this group—*Puschi* and *The Birthday*.

Modern talking-beast tales should be chosen with discrimination. If Beatrix Potter went back to her Bible-reading when she felt her style needed chastening, we had better reread Beatrix Potter and *The Wind in the Willows* when we are in doubt about the multitude of these new beast tales.

### Inanimate objects personified

Although the fanciful story about the secret life of toys and other inanimate objects was Andersen's invention, it took the writers of the twentieth century to use this form at the child's level, with an inventiveness and charm that already have made some of these stories children's classics. Andersen's tales of the little china shepherdess and the chimney sweep or the rusty tin soldier are faintly sad and decidedly adult. Later writers have avoided both these pitfalls. Their dolls, trains, and airplanes are cheerful and lively.

#### Richard Henry Horne Memoirs of a London Doll

In the nineteenth century there was one popular example of this type of story, the English *Memoirs of a London Doll* (1846) by Richard Henry Horne (pseudonym Mrs. Fairstar). In this book, Maria Poppett, the doll, tells her own story.

Tom Plummy traded an elegant Twelfth-cake for Maria as a present for his little sister, Ellen Plummy. The doll tells all the things she and her mistress did and saw together in

the London of a hundred years ago. The Christmas pantomime, the Lord Mayor's show, a typical Punch and Judy entertainment, the food, the clothes, and the activities of long ago are described. Although some little girls still enjoy this early doll story, it is not an important book today, but it is interesting to adults as the ancestor of the American *Hitty*, the Newbery Award written by Rachel Field (p. 338).

### Carlo Lorenzini

#### The Adventures of Pinocchio

The strongest impetus to the modern personification type of story may well stem not from Hans Andersen's tales but from that popular Italian classic, *Pinocchio*. Written in 1880 by a witty Tuscan, Carlo Lorenzini (pseudonym Collodi), it was apparently first translated into English and published in this country in 1892. From then on, it has held a high place in the affections of American children and has undoubtedly influenced American writers.

The story concerns a rogue of a puppet which old Geppetto painstakingly carves out of wood. Hardly has the poor wood carver finished his marionette when the saucy creature kicks him, leaps down from the bench, and makes off through the door, in pursuit of life, liberty, and his own sweet way. Pinocchio is full of good resolutions: to buy new clothes for his dear papa Geppetto, to go to school, to learn his lessons, and to be a good boy generally. Instead, he wastes his money, lies about it, plays hooky from school, and chooses for his companions the villains and the boobies. Every time he lies to his friend the Blue Fairy, his nose grows longer, until soon he can't turn around in a room without colliding with the walls. The Talking Cricket talks good sense to the young rascal, but Pinocchio's head is too completely wooden to profit by this voice of conscience. The Blue Fairy aids him but in vain. She can't check his follies. The climax is his journey to the Land of Toys, where there is never any school and where he finds

presently that he has grown a fine pair of donkey ears and a body to match. Saved again and again by the good Blue Fairy, he learns that she is ill and starving. He is roused at last, earns money to feed and care for both Geppetto and the Fairy, and wakes in the morning to find himself no longer a puppet but a real boy, living with Geppetto in a well-kept home. Geppetto explains,

"... when bad boys become good and kind, they have the power of making their homes gay and new with happiness."

And the irrepressible Pinocchio, looking at the remains of the puppet dangling on the wall, remarks to himself with great complacency:

"How ridiculous I was as a marionette! And how happy I am, now that I have become a real boy!"

Despite all the sinning and repenting, here he is—still cocky, still vain and boastful! This is the children's own epic, themselves in wood, full of good resolutions, given to folly sliding through somehow, but with one difference—Pinocchio always comes out on top and never quite loses face. This is what they love. Pinocchio does more naughty things than they ever dreamed of, suffers more awful punishments than ever fell to their lot, but still he remains jauntily and exuberantly triumphant.

No child's book of the nineteenth century in any country is more completely on the child's level. Pinocchio's wickedness is bloodcurdling from the child's angle—kicking his good papa, running away, lying like a trooper—but then the swift punishments which follow every misdeed are equally bloodcurdling and objective. Suppose our noses started growing every time we told a lie? The children giggle a little uneasily and can hardly wait to read what happens next. Even the jokes are understandable, which is not always true in the great English classics, and there are laughs on almost every page. After Pinocchio and Lamp-Wick have grown donkey ears, they meet, each wearing a large

house, headed for a bath, dragging Pooh by one leg. The stories are finished, Christopher is himself, and Pooh is Pooh. This is not only a tale about toys come to life, but also a clever fantasy for the youngest—not too complicated, no fairies, just a little boy sharing make-believe adventures with his toys and the little creatures of the woods, but knowing all the time that they *are* make-believe. It's a game of "let's pretend" put into story form, and children anywhere from five to nine or even ten enjoy both of these books.

#### Rachel Field

##### Hitty, Her First Hundred Years

Rachel Field and the artist Dorothy Lathrop were fascinated by an old doll in a New York antique shop. She was carved from mountain ash and dated back to whaling days in Maine. Rachel Field bought the doll, started a book about her to be illustrated by Dorothy Lathrop, and prophesied, as a justification for her extravagance, that this story was going to win the Newbery Award. Indeed, *Hitty* (1929) was so honored and was present in person when Rachel Field made her acceptance speech and received the medal.

The book records Hitty's numerous adventures which range all the way from being shipwrecked and serving as a heathen idol on a remote island to hearing Adelina Patti sing and being on exhibition in New Orleans. Unfortunately, *Hitty* followed the example of her predecessor, Maria Poppert, and told

her story in the first person. This is a form children dislike, and it has been a handicap to Hitty's popularity. But since little girls enjoy almost anything about a doll and there are few doll stories, *Hitty* is read by girls from ten to twelve years old.

#### Rumer Godden

##### Impunity Jane

The English novelist, Rumer Godden, lavished a rare skill on her first book for children, *The Dolls' House* (1947). It is a drama of conflict within a group of dolls when a strange, haughty doll invades their happy home. Like Andersen's tales, this is in a minor key.

The second story, *Impunity Jane* (1954), is gay enough to make up for all the wistful melancholy of the other. Jane is meant for adventure. She is only finger-sized, and the shop woman says she can be dropped "with impunity." But Jane never dreamed she'd be dropped into a stuffy doll house where nothing ever happens. Then one day, she is carried off by a boy, Gideon. He only means to borrow her, but from the start they are so compatible he just keeps her. Jane is a sailor in his toy boats, a pilot in his airplanes, or she dwells in igloos, wigwags, or rocket ships. It is a grand life for her, but Gideon is suffering from an accusing conscience. When he confesses, the solution is joyful. Just as well written as *The Dolls' House*, and with the most beguiling illustrations, this is considered by many people the best doll story to date.

### Modern examples of machinery personified

Tales in which modern machinery is personified furnish the child with something he desires and seems likely to enjoy permanently. There were a few forerunners of these recent stories about machinery. Every Lindergarten teacher told "The Little Engine That Could" to delighted groups of five-year-olds. This story with its refrain, "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can," still

popular, and still fun to tell. Lucy Sprague Mitchell followed with another repetitional engine story, "How the Engine Learned the Knowing Song," which, if not as spontaneous as its predecessor, is still enjoyed by the youngest children. Then in 1939 *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* took the five-year-olds by storm and was almost equally popular with older children. Virginia Burton,

the author-artist of *Mike Mulligan*, has repeated her success with several other books, one of them, *The Little House*, receiving the Caldecott Award.

**Virginia Burton**

Choo Choo

Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel

The Little House

Katy and the Big Snow

If artists have any facility with words, they should make good storytellers, because graphic representation means the ability to see clearly and to bring to life for others what is taking place. Virginia Burton (Mrs. George Demetrios, in private life) uses her brush and words in the happiest possible combination. Her books are all picture-stories, that is, stories in which the pictures are an integral part of the text, interpreting and even adding to the word story. Her subjects are machines, or inanimate objects in a world of machines. This preoccupation with machinery very likely came as a natural response to the interests of her sons when they were small.

**A steam shovel, a snow shovel,  
and a train**

Mike Mulligan owned a fine steam shovel with which he did important jobs of excavation until his machine, Mary Anne, was outmoded by new and more powerful models. Jobs no longer came his way, and Mike and his faithful shovel were in a bad state. Then Mike read about a town which wished to have its Town Hall excavation dug in a great hurry. Mike and Mary Anne hastened to the scene of action and offered to dig it in one day or no pay. The city fathers agreed, seeing a chance to get their excavation done for nothing, since such a feat seemed obviously impossible. The next morning Mary Anne and Mike went to work. Dirt flew in all directions, and the watching crowds grew to a mob and hung breathlessly over the heaving, bouncing Mary Anne, driven by Mike. At last, exactly on the hour, the excavation was finished, deep and well squared off at the corners. The crowd burst into loud

cheers. The only trouble was that Mike, in his excitement, had dug himself in, and there was no way of getting Mary Anne out. So Mary Anne just became the furnace of the new Town Hall and Mike her attendant. Both lived a warm, prosperous, and respected life ever after.

*Katy and the Big Snow*, the story of a snow shovel, has a similar format and manner but is not so popular as Mike is. *Choo Choo* preceded *Mike* by two years and is a favorite also. A new large edition of *Choo Choo* gives room for the exciting action drawings the author-illustrator does so well.

**Appeal of machine stories**

These machine stories have certain marked characteristics which help to explain their popularity. The plot always involves a staggering task or action and has considerable suspense. The illustrations heighten the feeling of action by swirling, circular lines that rush across the page and stem from or center on the cause of it all. You can almost see movement in the pictures of Mary Anne tearing around that hole with dirt flying in all directions and of the crowd of tiny figures with their gaze focused on the snorting steam shovel. In the pictures of *Choo Choo*, trees, bridges, and telegraph poles yield to the on-rushing momentum of the reckless runaway. The eye follows Choo Choo past or into or out of the next set of obstacles. The action of the text, together with the rhythmic movement in the pictures, keeps young readers (or read-tos) fairly breathless.

Another appeal to the children is the personification of the machines. This personification is not overdone and consists only of a face, but what a face! For instance, Mary Anne droops, or takes heart, or snorts with determination, or gets red in the face with effort, or smirks complacently. These pictures merely illustrate what every automobile driver has always felt about his car. He knows perfectly well when it sulks, or feels affable, or strives mightily. Of course his car has a personality. Virginia Burton sees her machines

through her boys' eyes and makes an engine or a steam shovel alive and responsive. If animals talk to their owners, why shouldn't machines also come heroically to life?

### Biography of a little house

*The Little House*, the Caldecott Award for 1943, is Virginia Burton's finest and most distinguished book so far. It tells the story of a house in the country which presently finds itself in the center of a village, and then in the midst of a great city where it is an insignificant obstruction between skyscrapers, with elevated trains overhead, subways beneath, and swarms of people everywhere. Rescued by the descendants of its builder, the little house

is taken back to the country where it can once more watch the cycle of the four seasons revolving in comely and ordered beauty.

There is a significance to this book that should make it permanently valuable both as literature and art. The evolution of cities in all their complexity and the resultant loss of some of the sweetness of earth and sky are implied in text and picture but not underscored or rubbed in. The house has only a delicately suggested face—a legitimate one, too, since the placement of the windows and door makes it look like a face. In this book the personification is subordinate to the pattern of these illustrations, something for children and adults to study with growing astonishment and delight. The pattern of every picture is the same—rhythmical curving lines which, in the country, are gracious and gentle but, in the city, become more and more violent and confused. The children's activities on the farm in each of the four seasons, the new event in each picture of urban growth, and the hundreds of dashing, darting people in the city are a part of the rich panorama and minute details which make this a book to be looked at again and again. It is a profound interpretation of one of the riddles of modern life, told and illustrated with sensitive perception.

Hardie Gramatky  
Little Toot  
Hercules  
Loopy

The same year *Mike Mulligan* appeared, another artist launched the first of a popular series of fanciful personifications of machines.

Illustration from Virginia Lee Burton's *The Little House*, Houghton Mifflin, 1942 (original in color, book 9 1/2 x 9 1/2)

It is significant that Virginia Burton studied for the ballet. There is certainly something of the dance in her swirling spirals and repeated use of circular design. These views of "the little house" show two stages in its eventful life. See also page 76.



Illustration from Hardie Gramatky's *Little Toot*, Putnam, 1939 (original in two colors, book 7 x 7½)

*Children delight in Hardie Gramatky's personifications of tugboats, fire engines, and airplanes. Little Toot's round, jolly face remains a favorite. Done in water colors, these pictures have a fresh, bright beauty.*



ery. Hardie Gramatky is a water colorist of distinction. His story of *Little Toot*, an irresponsible tugboat, appeared in 1939 and was immediately popular. Toot is hilariously personified, as are all his tugboat relatives. Toot is a lazy youngster, a disgrace to his hard-working family. How he finally reforms and makes a heroic rescue is amusingly told and pictured. Toot was followed by *Hercules*, the story of a horse-drawn fire engine forced to retire. Hercules came into his own for one last grand run, and the pictures, in the loudest, fieriest colors, are as exciting as the text. *Loopy* is the story of an airplane used by student pilots for practice, but Loopy yearns to be a skywriter. Mr. Gramatky's personifications are extremely funny, and his tales have a breezy, masculine touch that all children enjoy—especially boys.

#### **Norman Bate**

##### **Who Built the Bridge?**

Six- to eight-year-old boys like the more serious personifications of Norman Bate's books. He takes the tremendous machines and building projects of our modern age and personifies them ever so slightly. In *Who Built the Bridge?* (1954), Old Bridge creaks and groans. He knows just how mean Big Sleepy the river can be, and he knows there must be

a new bridge to stand against the river. So the great bulldozers, the pile drivers, and the huge cranes go to work. Young readers identify themselves with the men who drive these machines. They, too, the children think, will drive piles, build highways, and dredge rivers when they grow up. Almost realism, these fine books and stirring illustrations have a rhythmic style that gives a sense of movement. They are factual and poetic; their values are both informational and aesthetic.

Certainly Virginia Burton, Hardie Gramatky, Norman Bate, and other gifted writers and illustrators have taken full advantage of the fact that to the modern child a machine is something alive and individual. These books prove beyond doubt not only that machines are one of the child's liveliest and most continuous interests, but that they can be a thrilling center of a good story.

#### **"Funny books"**

Adults may speak of "drolls" or "tales of laughter" or "humorous stories," but the children say to librarians, "I want a *funny* book," and so do all of us now and then. Chapter 6 discusses the therapeutic value of

nonsense and the need to break our tensions with laughter. One of the best ways to get a double dose of this curative property is to read aloud to a child one of his favorite "funny books." He laughs so hard you have

to stop reading, and presently you find yourself beginning to give way to the rib-tickling humor that captivates the child. Just to discuss a funny book with a child or to hear him tell about it is to regain instantly your sense of the wholesome gaiety of life. One eight-year-old, reporting Hugh Lofting's *Mrs. Tubbs* in a classroom, would tell an episode, then go off into contagious chuckles, and finally, when she could scarcely speak for laughter, would show a picture and murmur, "Honestly, it's awful funny; you'll just have to read it yourself." Before she got through, she had the whole room full of children laughing, too, and of course every one of them read *Mrs. Tubbs*.<sup>1</sup>

These humorous books are not a class by themselves but cut across all other groups. Some are talking beasts, some are fantasies, some are told in folk-tale style, some are personifications, and some, like the folk-tale drolls, are improbable but almost realistic. Many adults would head the humorous list with *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, but, on the whole, its humor is a little subtle for children; they smile rather than laugh at *Alice*. On the other hand, all of Hugh Lofting's books could be grouped here as well as with the talking beasts. In the following category of funny books, then, are only a few types—stories written primarily for sheer fun, even nonsense, with no morals anywhere and no double meanings of a serious nature. Funny books they were intended to be and funny books they are.

#### Lucretia Hale

##### The Peterkin Papers

In the latter part of the nineteenth century, Lucretia Hale began to create for her friends' children a series of tales about a certain Peterkin family. These stories continue to seem as fantastically funny as the day they were published. Miss Eliza Orne White tells us that the episode which furnished Mrs. Hale with the idea for her stories was as absurd as

any in the book. While visiting the White family, Mrs. Hale was about to start for a drive with her friends when the horse refused to go. They discovered, after all efforts to move him had failed, that he was still tied to the hitching post. Hence the story, "Mrs. Peterkin Wishes to Go to Drive."

The Peterkin family consists of Mr. and Mrs. Peterkin, Solomon John, Agamemnon, Elizabeth Eliza, and the little boys in india-rubber boots. They learn wisdom by consulting "the lady from Philadelphia." For instance, Mrs. Peterkin puts salt in her morning coffee instead of sugar. They call the chemist who makes it worse. The herb woman puts in a little of everything, and the coffee is frightful. The lady from Philadelphia suggests that they throw it out and make a fresh cup of coffee. A happy solution! A new piano is moved into the house, but the movers leave it with the keyboard against a window. Elizabeth Eliza, seated on the porch, plays the piano through the window, a satisfactory arrangement as long as the weather is warm. When winter comes, it takes the lady from Philadelphia to suggest that they turn the piano around. The stories continue in this vein.

Here is "Clever Elsie" multiplied into a whole family, and both Elsie and the Peterkins are ancestors of the "moron stories" of recent years. The humor is obvious and robust. An upper-grade class can even make up its own *Peterkin Papers*.

#### Rudyard Kipling

##### Just So Stories

Living in India for many years and thus familiar with the Indian Jatakas and the usual pattern of a "why" story, Rudyard Kipling wrote his own collection of explanatory tales in amusing imitation of the old form. "How the Whale Got His Throat" and "How the Leopard Got His Spots" begin seriously and end with a logical kind of nonsense that reminds us of *Alice*.

"The Sing-song of Old Man Kangaroo" explains that the Kangaroo got his long tail

<sup>1</sup>Mount Auburn School, Cleveland.



because a certain Yellow-Dog Dingo chased him halfway across the world, ending in Australia, where they were both too exhausted to run another step. By that time, the Kangaroo's hind legs had lengthened, and he had grown a long and powerful tail which helped him to jump, but he complained to the God Ngong:

*"He's chased me out of the homes of my childhood; he's chased me out of my regular meal-times; he's altered my shape so I'll never get it back; and he's played the Old Scratch with my legs."*

Yellow-Dog Dingo complains, too, and, when left together, each says, *"That's your fault."*

"The Cat that Walked by Himself, walking by his wild lone through the Wet Wild Woods and waving his wild tail," is funny, but the children's favorite is "The Elephant's Child." This story explains how the elephant's "blackish, bulgy nose, as big as a boot" grew to the long trunk we see today. It was all because of the "'satiabie curiosity" of the Elephant's Child, who, after innumerable spankings, ran away to seek knowledge by the banks of "the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River." There the Crocodile, weeping crocodile-tears, gets hold of that bulgy nose and tries to pull the Elephant's Child into the river. Elephant's Child sits back on his haunches and begins to pull, too, and his nose lengthens even as he squeals, *"Led go! You are hurtig be!"* But the Crocodile will not let go. Finally the Bi-Coloured-Python-Rock-Snake comes to the rescue and helps the Elephant's Child to pull his elongated nose free. After nursing it tenderly and trying, in vain, to shrink it in the river, the Elephant's Child begins to experiment with his long nose. He "schlooped up a schloop of mud—and slapped it on his head, where it made a cool schloppy-sloshy mud-cap all trickly behind his ears." Then he finds he can do a lot of things he could never do before. Suddenly he remembers those spankings he received, and back he goes full speed looking for his relatives. They are shocked by the long nose and

indulge in deprecating remarks about it until the Elephant's Child interrupts, saying,

*"But it's very useful,"* and he picked up his hairy uncle, the Baboon, by one hairy leg, and hove him into a hornet's nest.

Then that bad Elephant's Child spanked all his dear families for a long time, till they were very warm and greatly astonished.

Naturally, as soon as they are able, the relatives also seek the great grey-green, greasy Limpopo River and come back with long trunks, after which, "nobody spanked anybody any more. . . ."

These are stories to be read aloud. They are cadenced, rhythmic, and full of handsome, high-sounding words, which are both mouth-filling and ear-delighting. It isn't necessary to stop and explain every word. The children will learn them, even as they learn "Hey diddle diddle," and the funny meanings will follow the funny sounds, gradually. The mock-serious tone of these pseudo-folk tales adds to their humor. Once the child catches on to the grandiloquent style and absurd meanings, he loves them. These stories are a good cure for too tight, humorless literalness. No child should miss hearing at least one of them, preferably "The Elephant's Child."

#### P. L. Travers

Mary Poppins

Mary Poppins Comes Back

P. L. Travers grew up in Australia, where high, wild winds blow everyone into a dither and make almost anything possible. So it is an east wind that blows Mary Poppins straight into the nursery of the Banks family, and a west wind that carries her off. The children first see her coming up the walk, bag in hand, and the next thing she strikes the house with a bang. Once their mother has engaged her as a nurse, Mary slides lightly up the banisters as neatly as the children slide down. When she opens her bag, they see it is quite empty, but out of it she takes everything from a folding cot to a bottle of medicine from which she doses the children with in-



*Floating away over the roofs of the houses*

Illustration by Mary Shepard for *Mary Poppins* by P. L. Travers, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1945 (book 4¾ x 7½)

*Mary Poppins looks so down-to-earth with her bag and umbrella that, although she is ascending heavenward, we know that is not her destination. "Just a bit of a blow!" we can hear her say. She'll be down any minute we are certain.*

The Poppins books are extremely British, with cooks, gardeners, maids, nanas, nurseries, and teas. The humor is sometimes adult and sometimes whimsical, but it is usually objective. Children who like these books like them enormously and wear them to shreds with rereadings; others dislike them with scornful heartiness. These violent differences seem to occur more often about fanciful books than about any others. At any rate, the Poppins books have enjoyed a continuous popularity and are now being paid the compliment of rather frequent imitations. The character of Mary Poppins herself has a flavor all its own. Vain, stern, crotchety, continually overtaken by magic but never admitting it, adored by the children she disciplines and enchants, Mary is indeed what the Irish would call "a char-ácter."

**Theodor Seuss Geisel**

And to Think That I Saw It on  
Mulberry Street

The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins

Theodor Seuss Geisel chose his middle name for a pen name, and then added the "Dr." as a purely honorary touch. But Dartmouth, his own college, decided to make it official. The college said he had long possessed a D.D.C.—doctor of delighted children—so it would merely add a doctor of humane letters!

Dr. Geisel and his wife live atop a precipitous hill from which they look down upon the city of La Jolla. They can see the ocean where the whales go by every spring, watch the fog roll in most any day, and, when it's clear, have a view of the mountains of Mexico. Perhaps this unusual setting helps to explain the fantasies and, in the draw-

credibly delicious liquid, tasting of strawberry ice or lime-juice cordial or whatever you prefer. "You won't leave us, will you?" Michael asks her anxiously, and she replies, "I'll stay till the wind changes," and she does.

Strange things happen during her stay. Having inhaled a little laughing gas, the children enjoy an elaborate tea party sitting comfortably on nothing at all around a table suspended in mid-air. They find a compass and journey north, south, east, and west without an effort. But a day comes when there is a wild west wind, and Mary is all gentleness. Her manner troubles the children and they beg her to be cross again. "Trouble trouble and it will trouble you!" she replies tartly and leaves them. Then they see her in the yard, the wind tugging at her skirts, her umbrella lifted. Suddenly she smiles at the wind, and it lifts her steadily and swiftly up and away from the children—Mary Poppins is gone.

Illustration from Dr. Seuss' *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, Vanguard, 1938 (original in two colors, book 8¼ x 11¼)

Note the number of ways in which Dr. Seuss suggests PERIL: the parapet is small and steep; the bent knees and jutting posteriors of all three figures lean away from the edge; clouds and spires show far below; over this abyss Bartholomew totters, top-heavy with hat.

ings, the continual use of hair-raising heights and precipices. Certainly the imagination of Dr. Seuss is never stopped by earthbound limitations.

His first book for children, *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* (1937), is still popular. A small boy sees only a cart and wagon on Mulberry Street but begins working up a bigger and bigger yarn to tell his father. Each succeeding page pictures the next addition to his tale until finally two pages across are necessary to get everything in. Then his father fixes him with a cold stare and his tale diminishes suddenly, leaving only the milk cart on Mulberry Street.

This rhymed narrative was only a sample of more and better nonsense to come. Of all the Seuss books not only is *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins* the best, but it is one of the most completely funny stories ever told for children.

Bartholomew Cubbins takes off his hat to the King only to find the royal coach stopping, and the King commanding him to take off his hat. Puzzled, he puts his hand to his head and finds a hat there. He jerks it off hastily only to find another in its place, and another, and another, and another. He is seized and threatened with death, but still the hats continue to crown his bewildered head. The horrid little Grand Duke Wilfred assures the King that it will be a pleasure to push Bartholomew off the highest parapet. Up the stairs they go, hats falling at every step. Finally the King sees upon the boy's head the most gloriously regal hat he has ever beheld. In exchange for this hat of elegance, he spates Bartholomew's life, and, as the befeathered hat



goes on the King's head, Bartholomew finds his own head bare at last. The outline of this story gives no idea of the humor of both pictures and text—Bartholomew bewildered, helpless, wild-eyed; the King outraged and frustrated; the headsman unable to behead because his clients must take their hats off. All of these are hilariously pictured and solemnly described. This story has a lively sequel, *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*.

Most adults like *Horton Hatches the Egg* best, with *Horton Hears a Who!* a close second. *Scrambled Eggs Super!* and *On Beyond Zebra* have little story but unlimited fantasy. Dr. Seuss has never written a commonplace or unfunny book, and his contribution to "delighted children" has been rich indeed.

**Richard and Florence Atwater**  
*Mr. Popper's Penguins*

Another funny book is *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, written by Richard and Florence Atwater. This wild yarn of *Mr. Popper's*

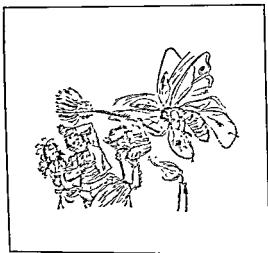


Illustration by Beth and Joe Krush for *The Borrowers*  
*Afield* by Mary Norton, Harcourt, Brace, 1955  
 (book 5¼ x 8, picture 4 x 3)

*Courageous Homily attacks the gigantic intruder. Notice how skillfully the artists characterize the frightened family in a moment of peril.*

*Penguins* is a nonsense tale narrated with gravity, and giving every indication of being a simple realistic story. Strictly speaking, nothing in the book is impossible, but because the narrative carries improbability to its uttermost limits it ends where Mr. Popper himself began—in the realm of the fanciful.

It tells the story of Mr. Popper, an untidy paperhanger with a passion for the Antarctic. An explorer rewards his admiration with a penguin. That one becomes twelve, and then the penguins revolutionize the lives of the entire Popper family. Eventually, the children return to school, Mrs. Popper gets to the meeting of the Ladies' Aid and Missionary Society, but Mr. Popper—? Well, when last seen Mr. Popper and his penguins were headed due north.

Astrid Lindgren

Pippi Longstocking

A Swedish writer of excellent detective stories for children (the *Bill Bergson* series) is also responsible for creating a superchild, the heroine of *Pippi Longstocking* (1950). Pippi is an outrageous and delightful orphan who lives competently with her monkey and horse

and takes control of any situation in which she finds herself. She cows some bullying boys, disrupts a school session, and manhandles two policemen when they try to take her to an orphanage. (Indeed, after carrying one in each hand, she sets them down so hard that it is some time before they can get up.) Then they report she is not a fit child for the orphanage!

Pippi's antics are exceedingly funny to children and to most adults. However, a few adults do have their doubts. A friend asks Pippi,

"But who tells you when to go to bed at night and things like that?"

"I tell myself," said Pippi. "First I tell myself in a nice friendly way; and then, if I don't mind, I tell myself again more sharply, and if I still don't mind, then I'm in for a spanking—see?"

Children *see* and revel in Pippi. "What a life!" they think.

Under each category of modern fanciful tales many more stories could be listed. Most of the examples discussed in this chapter are outstanding because they pointed the way or were exceptions or became classics or seem likely to attain that distinction. Even with innumerable omissions, the list is a long one and is growing longer yearly.

These fanciful stories are not to be given as a special group to children, but they should be brought in for variety between poetry and geography or between realistic fiction and science. They are perhaps the dessert on the child's literary menu, although the best of them are sustaining food in themselves. Occasionally you find a child who likes to read fairy tales and nothing else. Perhaps, temporarily, they are what he needs, and he will swing back to realistic stories when he can hold his own and has a little happiness to spare. Generally, children enjoy these books as a change from the here and now, as a breathing space in the serious process of growing up. It is a rare child who does not

like some of them, and most children enjoy many of them. Adults sometimes wonder why.

We are supposed to be a factually-minded, machine-age generation, yet we and our children go on loving *The Wind in the Willows*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Pinocchio*, *Mary Poppins*, *Peter Rabbit*, *Bartholomew Cubbins*, *Millions of Cats*, *Little Toot*, and *Ben and Me*—stories about people doing the impossible, dolls and puppets running wild, animals talking sense and nonsense, tugboats with character, mice writing the biographies of statesmen. Why do airplane-minded children love these books? Probably because they provide children with another kind of flight, a flight into other worlds, incredible, exciting, satisfying.

Children identify themselves with the strange people, objects, and creatures when they read about story characters surmounting every obstacle and living intently their own secret lives, overlooked by the dull world. This is precisely the child's position in society. He, too, is secretly going about his own business, misunderstood by dull grown-ups. A little boy is driving an airplane when his mother calls him to come in and get washed. She can't even see the pilot affronted by this indignity. Or someone says to a little girl, "No, you can't take that battered old doll downtown," and the child has to comfort the mutely hurt and unhappy doll. Children walk about their own yards as pirates, princesses, and fire engines, and we who have eyes do not see them thus transformed and free. Most children are "wind-runners" by nature and if they aren't, what a pity! These tales will help the swift wind-runners to soar higher, and will teach those who have never learned to run on the wind at least how to walk a little more boldly, with more faith in the unseen. Hans Christian Andersen, Kenneth Grahame, Beatrix Potter, Mary Norton, E. B. White, C. S. Lewis, A. A. Milne, and the others can reach a hand to the child and teach him to turn somersaults in the clouds or climb skyward on the rainbow.

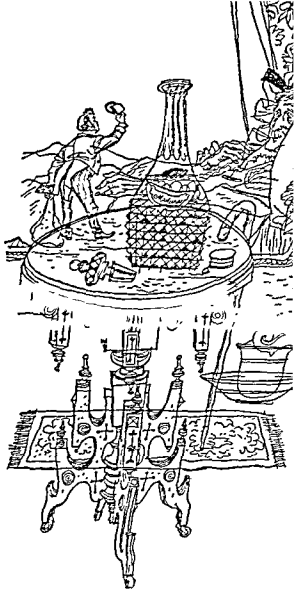


Illustration by Beth and Joe Krush for  
*The Borrowers* by Mary Norton, Harcourt,  
Brace, 1953 (book 4 3/4 x 7 1/2)

See how subtly unreality is suggested  
by the background lines that show right through  
Pod's plump body. The details in this  
picture may be more appreciated by grown-ups  
than children, but the dramatic import of  
Pod's acceptance by that ancient crone is evident.

## Illustrative selections

*These selections illustrate types of stories discussed in Chapters 11-14. They are no substitute for reading the books from which they are taken, but they show some characteristics*

*discussed in the text. Dialogue, characterization, theme and plot, humor, description, style—all are to be found in these samplings, which are best used as the chapters are read.*

### The Pancake<sup>1</sup>

ONCE on a time there was a goody who had seven hungry bairns, and she was frying a pancake for them. It was a sweet-milk pancake, and there it lay in the pan bubbling and frizzling so thick and good, it was a sight for sore eyes to look at. And the bairns stood round about, and the goodman sat by and looked on.

"Oh, give me a bit of pancake, mother, dear; I am so hungry," said one bairn.

"Oh, darling mother," said the second.

"Oh, darling, good mother," said the third.

"Oh, darling, good, nice mother," said the fourth.

"Oh, darling, pretty, good, nice, clever mother," said the sixth.

"Oh, darling, pretty, good, nice, clever, sweet mother," said the seventh.

So they begged for the pancake all round, the one more prettily than the other; for they were so hungry and so good.

"Yes, yes, bairns, only bide a bit till it turns itself,"—she ought to have said, "till I can get it turned,"—"and then you shall all have some—a lovely sweet-milk pancake; only look how fat and happy it lies there."

When the pancake heard that it got afraid, and in a trice it turned itself all of itself, and tried to jump out of the pan; but it fell back

into it again t'other side up, and so when it had been fried a little on the other side too, till it got firmer in its flesh, it sprang out on the floor, and rolled off like a wheel through the door and down the hill.

"Holloa! Stop, pancake!" and away went the goody after it, with the frying-pan in one hand and the ladle in the other, as fast as she could, and her bairns behind her, while the goodman limped after them last of all.

"Hi! won't you stop? Seize it. Stop, pancake," they all screamed out, one after the other, and tried to catch it on the run and hold it; but the pancake rolled on and on, and in the twinkling of an eye it was so far ahead that they couldn't see it, for the pancake was faster on its feet than any of them.

So when it had rolled awhile it met a man.

"Good day, pancake," said the man.

"God bless you, Manny Panny!" said the pancake.

"Dear pancake," said the man, "don't roll so fast; stop a little and let me eat you."

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the goodman, and seven squalling children, I may well slip through your fingers, Manny Panny," said the pancake, and rolled on and on till it met a hen.

"Good day, pancake," said the hen.

"The same to you, Henny Penny," said the pancake.

"Pancake, dear, don't roll so fast, but bide a bit and let me eat you up," said the hen.

<sup>1</sup>From *Tales from the Field* by Peter Christian Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe, translated by Sir George Webbe Dasent, G. P. Putnam's Sons.

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the Goodman, and seven squalling children, and Manny Panny, I may well slip through your claws, Henny Penny," said the pancake, and so it rolled on like a wheel down the road.

Just then it met a cock.

"Good day, pancake," said the cock.

"The same to you, Cocky Locky," said the pancake.

"Pancake, dear, don't roll so fast, but bide a bit and let me eat you up."

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the Goodman, and seven squalling children, and to Manny Panny, and Henny Penny, I may well slip through your claws, Cocky Locky," said the pancake, and off it set rolling away as fast as it could; and when it had rolled a long way it met a duck.

"Good day, pancake," said the duck.

"The same to you, Ducky Lucky."

"Pancake, dear, don't roll away so fast; bide a bit and let me eat you up."

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the Goodman, and seven squalling children, and Manny Panny, and Henny Penny, and Cocky Locky, I may well slip through your fingers, Ducky Lucky," said the pancake, and with that it took to rolling and rolling faster than ever; and when it had rolled a long, long while, it met a goose.

"Good day, pancake," said the goose.

"The same to you, Goosey Poosey."

"Pancake, dear, don't roll so fast; bide a bit and let me eat you up."

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the Goodman, and seven squalling children, and Manny Panny, and Henny Penny, and Cocky Locky, and Ducky Lucky, I can well slip through your feet, Goosey Poosey," said the pancake, and off it rolled.

So when it had rolled a long, long way farther it met a gander.

"Good day, pancake," said the gander.

"The same to you, Gander Pander," said the pancake.

"Pancake, dear, don't roll so fast; bide a bit and let me eat you up."

"When I have given the slip to Goody Poody, and the Goodman, and seven squalling children, and Manny Panny, and Henny Penny, and Cocky Locky, and Ducky Lucky, and Goosey Poosey, I may well slip through your feet,

Gander Pander," said the pancake, which rolled off as fast as ever.

So when it had rolled a long, long time, it met a pig.

"Good day, pancake," said the pig.

"The same to you, Piggy Wiggy," said the pancake, which, without a word more, began to roll and roll like mad.

"Nay, nay," said the pig, "you needn't be in such a hurry; we two can then go side by side and see one another over the wood; they say it is not too safe in there."

The pancake thought there might be something in that, and so they kept company. But when they had gone awhile, they came to a brook. As for Piggy, he was so fat he swam safe across, it was nothing to him; but the poor pancake couldn't get over.

"Seat yourself on my snout," said the pig, "and I'll carry you over."

So the pancake did that.

"Ouf, ouf," said the pig, and swallowed the pancake at one gulp; and then, as the poor pancake could go no farther, why—this story can go no farther either.

## Gudbrand on the Hill-side<sup>1</sup>

ONCE on a time there was a man whose name was Gudbrand; he had a farm which lay far, far away upon a hill-side, and so they called him Gudbrand on the Hill-side.

Now, you must know this man and his goodwife lived so happily together, and understood one another so well, that all the husband did the wife thought so well done there was nothing like it in the world, and she was always glad whatever he turned his hand to. The farm was their own land, and they had a hundred dollars lying at the bottom of their chest, and two cows tethered up in a stall in their farm-yard.

So one day his wife said to Gudbrand:

"Do you know, dear, I think we ought to take one of your cows into town and sell it; that's what I think; for then we shall have some money in hand, and such well-to-do people as

<sup>1</sup>From *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon* by Peter Christen Asbjørnsen, translated by Sir George Webbe Dasent, G. P. Putnam's Sons.

we ought to have ready money like the rest of the world. As for the hundred dollars at the bottom of the chest yonder, we can't make a hole in them, and I'm sure I don't know what we want with more than one cow. Besides, we shall gain a little in another way, for then I shall get off with looking after only one cow, instead of having, as now, to feed and litter and water two."

Well, Gudbrand thought his wife talked right good sense, so he set off at once with the cow on his way to town to sell her; but when he got to the town, there was no one who would buy his cow.

"Well! well! never mind," said Gudbrand, "at the worst, I can only go back home again with my cow. I've both stable and tether for her, I should think, and the road is no farther out than in"; and with that he began to toddle home with his cow.

But when he had gone a bit of the way, a man met him who had a horse to sell, so Gudbrand thought 'twas better to have a horse than a cow, so he swopped with the man. A little farther on, he met a man walking along, and driving a fat pig before him, and he thought it better to have a fat pig than a horse, so he swopped with the man. After that he went a little farther, and a man met him with a goat; so he thought it better to have a goat than a pig, and he swopped with the man that owned the goat. Then he went on a good bit till he met a man who had a sheep, and he swopped with him too, for he thought it always better to have a sheep than a goat. After a while he met a man with a goose, and he swopped away the sheep for the goose; and when he had walked a long, long time, he met a man with a cock, and he swopped with him, for he thought in this wise, "Tis surely better to have a cock than a goose." Then he went on till the day was far spent, and he began to get very hungry, so he sold the cock for a shilling, and bought food with the money, for, thought Gudbrand on the Hill-side, "Tis always better to save one's life than to have a cock."

After that he went on home till he reached his nearest neighbor's house, where he turned in.

"Well," said the owner of the house, "how did things go with you in town?"

"Rather so so," said Gudbrand; "I can't praise my luck, nor do I blame it either"; and with that he told the whole story from first to last.

"Ah!" said his friend, "you'll get nicely hauled over the coals, that one can see, when you get home to your wife. Heaven help you, I wouldn't stand in your shoes for something."

"Well!" said Gudbrand on the Hill-side, "I think things might have gone worse with me; but now, whether I have done wrong or not, I have so kind a goodwife, she never has a word to say against anything that I do."

"Oh!" answered his neighbor. "I hear what you say, but I don't believe it for all that."

"Shall we lay a bet upon it?" asked Gudbrand on the Hill-side. "I have a hundred dollars at the bottom of my chest at home; will you lay as many against them?"

Yes, the friend was ready to bet; so Gudbrand stayed there till evening, when it began to get dark, and then they went together to his house, and the neighbor was to stand outside the door and listen, while the man went in to see his wife.

"Good evening!" said Gudbrand on the Hill-side.

"Good evening!" said the goodwife. "Oh! is that you? Now, God be praised!"

Yes, it was he. So the wife asked how things had gone with him in town.

"Oh! only so so," answered Gudbrand; "not much to brag of. When I got to the town there was no one who would buy the cow, so you must know I swopped it away for a horse."

"For a horse!" said his wife; "well, that is good of you; thanks with all my heart. We are so well-to-do that we may drive to church, just as well as other people; and if we choose to keep a horse we have a right to get one, I should think. So run out, child, and put up the horse."

"Ah!" said Gudbrand, "but you see I've not got the horse after all; for when I got a bit farther on the road, I swopped it away for a pig."

"Think of that now!" said the wife; "you did just as I should have done myself; a thousand thanks! Now I can have a bit of bacon in the house to set before people when they come to see me, that I can. What do we want with a horse? People would only say we had got so proud that we couldn't walk to church. Go out, child, and put up the pig in the sty."

"But I've not got the pig either," said Gudbrand; "for when I got a little farther on, I swopped it away for a milch goat."

"Bless us!" cried his wife, "how well you



manage everything! Now I think it over, what should I do with a pig? People would only point at us and say, 'Yonder they eat up all they have got.' No! now I have got a goat, and I shall have milk and cheese, and keep the goat too. Run out, child, and put up the goat."

"Nay, but I haven't got the goat either," said Gudbrand, "for a little farther on I swopped it away, and got a fine sheep instead."

"You don't say so!" cried his wife; "why you do everything to please me, just as if I had been with you; what do we want with a goat? If I had it I should lose half my time in climbing up the hills to get it down. No! if I have a sheep, I shall have both wool and clothing, and fresh meat in the house. Run out child, and put up the sheep."

"But I haven't got the sheep any more than the rest," said Gudbrand, "for when I had gone a bit farther, I swopped it away for a goose."

"Thank you, thank you, with all my heart!" cried his wife; "what should I do with a sheep? I have no spinning-wheel, nor carding-comb, nor should I care to worry myself with cutting, and shaping, and sewing clothes. We can buy clothes now, as we have always done; and now I shall have roast goose, which I have longed for so often; and, besides, down to stuff my little pillow with. Run out, child, and put up the goose."

"Ah!" said Gudbrand, "but I haven't the goose either; for when I had gone a bit farther I swopped it away for a cock."

"Dear me!" cried his wife, "how you think of everything! just as I should have done myself! A cock! think of that! why, it's as good as an eight-day clock, for every morning the cock crows at four o'clock, and we shall be able to stir our stumps in good time. What should we do with a goose? I don't know how to cook it; and as for my pillow, I can stuff it with cotton-grass. Run out, child, and put up the cock."

"But, after all, I haven't got the cock," said Gudbrand; "for when I had gone a bit farther, I got as hungry as a hunter, so I was forced to sell the cock for a shilling for fear I should starve."

"Now, God be praised that you did so!" cried his wife; "whatever you do, you do it always just after my own heart. What should we do with a cock? We are our own masters, I should think, and can lie a-bed in the morning as long as we like. Heaven be thanked that

I have got you safe back again! you do everything so well that I want neither cock nor goose; neither pigs nor kine."

Then Gudbrand opened the door and said: "Well, what do you say now? Have I won the hundred dollars?" and his neighbor was forced to allow that he had.

## Budulinek<sup>1</sup>

THERE was once a little boy named Budulinek. He lived with his old Granny in a cottage near a forest.

Granny went out to work every day. In the morning when she went away she always said:

"There, Budulinek, there's your dinner on the table and mind, you mustn't open the door no matter who knocks!"

One morning Granny said:

"Now, Budulinek, today I'm leaving you some soup for your dinner. Eat it when dinner time comes. And remember what I always say: don't open the door no matter who knocks."

She went away and pretty soon Lishka, the sly old mother fox, came and knocked on the door.

"Budulinek!" she called. "You know me! Open the door! Please!"

Budulinek called back:

"No, I mustn't open the door."

But Lishka, the sly old mother fox, kept on knocking.

"Listen, Budulinek," she said: "if you open the door, do you know what I'll do? I'll give you a ride on my tail!"

Now Budulinek thought to himself:

"Oh, that would be fun to ride on the tail of Lishka, the fox!"

So Budulinek forgot all about what Granny said to him every day and opened the door.

Lishka, the sly old thing, came into the room and what do you think she did? Do you think she gave Budulinek a ride on her tail? Well, she didn't. She just went over to the table and gobbled up the bowl of soup that Granny had put there for Budulinek's dinner and then she ran away.

When dinner time came Budulinek hadn't anything to eat.

<sup>1</sup>From *The Shoemaker's Apron*, copyright, 1920, by Parker Fillmore. By permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

In the evening when Granny came home, she said:

"Budulinek, did you open the door and let anyone in?"

Budulinek was crying because he was so hungry, and he said:

"Yes, I let in Lishka, the old mother fox, and she ate up all my dinner, too!"

Granny said:

"Now, Budulinek, you see what happens when you open the door and let some one in. Another time remember what Granny says and don't open the door."

The next morning Granny cooked some porridge for Budulinek's dinner and said:

"Now, Budulinek, here's some porridge for your dinner. Remember, while I'm gone you must not open the door no matter who knocks."

Granny was no sooner out of sight than Lishka came again and knocked on the door.

"Oh, Budulinek!" she called, "Open the door and let me in!"

But Budulinek said:

"No, I won't open the door!"

"Oh, now, Budulinek, please open the door!" Lishka begged. "You know me! Do you know what I'll do if you open the door? I'll give you a ride on my tail! Truly I will!"

Budulinek thought to himself:

"This time maybe she will give me a ride on her tail."

So he opened the door.

Lishka came into the room, gobbled up Budulinek's porridge, and ran away without giving him any ride at all.

When dinner time came Budulinek hadn't anything to eat.

In the evening when Granny came home she said:

"Budulinek, did you open the door and let anyone in?"

Budulinek was crying again because he was so hungry, and he said:

"Yes, I let in Lishka, the old mother fox, and she ate up all my porridge, too!"

"Budulinek, you're a bad boy!" Granny said. "If you open the door again, I'll have to spank you! Do you hear?"

The next morning before she went to work, Granny cooked some peas for Budulinek's dinner.

As soon as Granny was gone he began eating the peas, they were so good.

Presently Lishka, the fox, came and knocked on the door.

"Budulinek!" she called. "Open the door! I want to come in!"

But Budulinek wouldn't open the door. He took his bowl of peas and went to the window and ate them there where Lishka could see him.

"Oh, Budulinek!" Lishka begged. "You know me! Please open the door! This time I promise you I'll give you a ride on my tail! Truly I will!"

She just begged and begged until at last Budulinek opened the door. Then Lishka jumped into the room and do you know what she did? She put her nose right into the bowl of peas and gobbled them all up!

Then she said to Budulinek:

"Now get on my tail and I'll give you a ride!"

So Budulinek climbed on Lishka's tail and Lishka went running around the room faster and faster until Budulinek was dizzy and just had to hold on with all his might.

Then, before Budulinek knew what was happening, Lishka slipped out of the house and ran off swiftly into the forest, home to her hole, with Budulinek still on her tail! She hid Budulinek down in her hole with her own three children and she wouldn't let him out. He had to stay there with the three little foxes and they all teased him and bit him. And then wasn't he sorry he had disobeyed his Granny! And, oh, how he cried!

When Granny came home she found the door open and no little Budulinek anywhere. She looked high and low, but no, there was no little Budulinek. She asked everyone she met had they seen her little Budulinek, but nobody had. So poor Granny just cried and cried, she was so lonely and sad.

One day an organ-grinder with a wooden leg began playing in front of Granny's cottage. The music made her think of Budulinek.

"Organ-grinder," Granny said, "here's a penny for you. But please, don't play any more. Your music makes me cry."

"Why does it make you cry?" the organ-grinder asked.

"Because it reminds me of Budulinek," Granny said, and she told the organ-grinder all about Budulinek and how somebody had stolen him away.

The organ-grinder said:

"Poor Granny! I tell you what I'll do: as I go around and play my organ I'll keep my eyes

open for Budulinek. If I find him I'll bring him back to you."

"Will you?" Granny cried. "If you bring me back my little Budulinek I'll give you a measure of rye and a measure of millet and a measure of poppy seed and a measure of everything in the house!"

So the organ-grinder went off and everywhere he played his organ he looked for Budulinek. But he couldn't find him.

At last one day while he was walking through the forest he thought he heard a little boy crying. He looked around everywhere until he found a fox's hole.

"Oho!" he said to himself. "I believe that wicked old Lishka must have stolen Budulinek! She's probably keeping him here with her own three children! I'll soon find out."

So he put down his organ and began to play. And as he played he sang softly:

"One old fox  
And two, three, four,  
And Budulinek  
He makes one more!"

Old Lishka heard the music playing and she said to her oldest child:

"Here, son, give the old man a penny and tell him to go away because my head aches."

So the oldest little fox climbed out of the hole and gave the organ-grinder a penny and said:

"My mother says, please will you go away because her head aches."

As the organ-grinder reached over to take the penny, he caught the oldest little fox and stuffed him into a sack. Then he went on playing and singing:

"One old fox  
And two and three  
And Budulinek  
Makes four for me!"

Presently Lishka sent out her second child with a penny and the organ-grinder caught the second little fox in the same way and stuffed it also into the sack. Then he went on grinding his organ and softly singing:

"One old fox  
And another for me,  
And Budulinek  
He makes the three."

"I wonder why that old man still plays his organ," Lishka said and sent out her third child with a penny.

So the organ-grinder caught the third little fox and stuffed it also into the sack. Then he kept on playing and singing softly:

"One old fox—  
I'll soon get you!—  
And Budulinek  
He makes just two."

At last Lishka herself came out. So he caught her, too, and stuffed her in with her children. Then he sang:

"Four naughty foxes  
Caught alive!  
And Budulinek  
He makes the five!"

The organ-grinder went to the hole and called down:

"Budulinek! Budulinek! Come out!"

As there were no foxes left to hold him back, Budulinek was able to crawl out.

When he saw the organ-grinder he cried and said:

"Oh, please, Mr. Organ-Grinder, I want to go home to my Granny!"

"I'll take you home to your Granny," the organ-grinder said, "but first I must punish these naughty foxes."

The organ-grinder cut a strong switch and gave the four foxes in the sack a terrible beating until they begged him to stop and promised that they would never again do anything to Budulinek.

Then the organ-grinder let them go and he took Budulinek home to Granny.

Granny was delighted to see her little Budulinek and she gave the organ-grinder a measure of rye and a measure of millet and a measure of poppy seed and a measure of everything else in the house.

And Budulinek never again opened the door!

## The Master Cat, or Puss in Boots<sup>1</sup>

ONCE upon a time there was a miller who left no more riches to the three sons he had than his mill, his ass, and his cat. The division was soon made. Neither the lawyer nor the attorney was sent for. They would soon have

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *The Tales of Mother Goose* as collected by Charles Perrault, translated by Charles Welsh. By permission of D. C. Heath and Company, Boston, Mass.

eaten up all the poor property. The eldest had the mill, the second the ass, and the youngest nothing but the cat.

The youngest, as we can understand, was quite unhappy at having so poor a share.

"My brothers," said he, "may get their living handsomely enough by joining their stocks together; but, for my part, when I have eaten up my cat, and made me a muff of his skin, I must die of hunger."

The Cat, who heard all this, without appearing to take any notice, said to him with a grave and serious air:—

"Do not thus afflict yourself, my master; you have nothing else to do but to give me a bag, and get a pair of boots made for me, that I may scamper through the brambles, and you shall see that you have not so poor a portion in me as you think."

Though the Cat's master did not think much of what he said, he had seen him play such cunning tricks to catch rats and mice—hanging himself by the heels, or hiding himself in the meal, to make believe he was dead—that he did not altogether despair of his helping him in his miseries. When the Cat had what he asked for, he booted himself very gallantly, and putting his bag about his neck, he held the strings of it in his two forepaws, and went into a warren where was a great number of rabbits. He put bran and sow-thistle into his bag, and, stretching out at length, as if he were dead, he waited for some young rabbits, not yet acquainted with the deceptions of the world, to come and rummage his bag for what he had put into it.

Scarcely was he settled but he had what he wanted. A rash and foolish young rabbit jumped into his bag, and Monsieur Puss, immediately drawing close the strings, took him and killed him at once. Proud of his prey, he went with it to the palace, and asked to speak with the King. He was shown upstairs into his Majesty's apartment, and, making a low bow to the King, he said:—

"I have brought you, sire, a rabbit which my noble Lord, the Marquis of Carabas" (for that was the title which Puss was pleased to give his master) "has commanded me to present to your Majesty from him."

"Tell thy master," said the King, "that I thank him, and that I am pleased with his gift."

Another time he went and hid himself among some standing corn, still holding his bag open; and when a brace of partridges ran into it, he drew the strings, and so caught them both. He then went and made a present of these to the King, as he had done before of the rabbit which he took in the warren. The King, in like manner, received the partridges with great pleasure, and ordered his servants to reward him.

The Cat continued for two or three months thus to carry his Majesty, from time to time, some of his master's game. One day when he knew that the King was to take the air along the riverside, with his daughter, the most beautiful princess in the world, he said to his master:—

"If you will follow my advice, your fortune is made. You have nothing else to do but go and bathe in the river, just at the spot I shall show you, and leave the rest to me."

The Marquis of Carabas did what the Cat advised him to, without knowing what could be the use of doing it. While he was bathing, the King passed by, and the Cat cried out with all his might:—

"Help! help! My Lord the Marquis of Carabas is drowning!"

At this noise the King put his head out of the coach window, and seeing the Cat who had so often brought him game, he commanded his guards to run immediately to the assistance of his Lordship the Marquis of Carabas.

While they were drawing the poor Marquis out of the river, the Cat came up to the coach and told the King that, while his master was bathing, there came by some rogues, who ran off with his clothes, though he had cried out, "Thieves! thieves!" several times, as loud as he could. The cunning Cat had hidden the clothes under a great stone. The King immediately commanded the officers of his wardrobe to run and fetch one of his best suits for the Lord Marquis of Carabas.

The King was extremely polite to him, and as the fine clothes he had given him set off his good looks (for he was well made and handsome), the King's daughter found him very much to her liking, and the Marquis of Carabas had no sooner cast two or three respectful and somewhat tender glances than she fell in love with him to distraction. The King would have him come into the coach and take

part in the airing. The Cat, overjoyed to see his plan begin to succeed, marched on before, and, meeting with some countrymen, who were mowing a meadow, he said to them:—

"Good people, you who are mowing, if you do not tell the King that the meadow you mow belongs to my Lord Marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as herbs for the pot."

The King did not fail to ask the mowers to whom the meadow they were mowing belonged.

"To my Lord Marquis of Carabas," answered they all together, for the Cat's threat had made them afraid.

"You have a good property there," said the King to the Marquis of Carabas.

"You see, sire," said the Marquis, "this is a meadow which never fails to yield a plentiful harvest every year."

The Master Cat, who went still on before, met with some reapers, and said to them:—

"Good people, you who are reaping, if you do not say that all this corn belongs to the Marquis of Carabas, you shall be chopped as small as herbs for the pot."

The King, who passed by a moment after, wished to know to whom belonged all that corn, which he then saw.

"To my Lord Marquis of Carabas," replied the reapers, and the King was very well pleased with it, as well as the Marquis, whom he congratulated thereupon. The Master Cat, who went always before, said the same thing to all he met, and the King was astonished at the vast estates of my Lord Marquis of Carabas.

Monsieur Puss came at last to a stately castle, the master of which was an Ogre, the richest ever known; for all the lands which the King had then passed through belonged to this castle. The Cat, who had taken care to inform himself who this Ogre was and what he could do, asked to speak with him, saying he could not pass so near his castle without having the honor of paying his respects to him.

The Ogre received him as civilly as an Ogre could do, and made him sit down.

"I have been assured," said the Cat, "that you have the gift of being able to change yourself into all sorts of creatures you have a mind to; that you can, for example, transform yourself into a lion, or elephant, and the like."

"That is true," answered the Ogre, roughly;

"and to convince you, you shall see me now become a lion."

Puss was so terrified at the sight of a lion so near him that he immediately climbed into the gutter, not without much trouble and danger, because of his boots, which were of no use at all to him for walking upon the tiles. A little while after, when Puss saw the Ogre had resumed his natural form, he came down and owned he had been very much frightened.

"I have, moreover, been informed," said the Cat, "but I know not how to believe it, that you have also the power to take on you the shape of the smallest animals; for example, to change yourself into a rat or a mouse, but I must own to you I take this to be impossible."

"Impossible!" cried the Ogre; "you shall see." And at the same time he changed himself into a mouse, and began to run about the floor. Puss no sooner perceived this than he fell upon him and ate him up.

Meanwhile, the King, who saw, as he passed, this fine castle of the Ogre's, had a mind to go into it. Puss, who heard the noise of his Majesty's coach coming over the drawbridge, ran out, and said to the King, "Your Majesty is welcome to this castle of my Lord Marquis of Carabas."

"What! my Lord Marquis," cried the King, "and does this castle also belong to you? There can be nothing finer than this courtyard and all the stately buildings which surround it; let us see the interior, if you please."

The Marquis gave his hand to the young Princess, and followed the King, who went first. They passed into the great hall, where they found a magnificent collation, which the Ogre had prepared for his friends, who were that very day to visit him, but dared not to enter, knowing the King was there. His Majesty, charmed with the good qualities of my Lord of Carabas, as was also his daughter, who had fallen violently in love with him, and seeing the vast estate he possessed, said to him:—

"It will be owing to yourself, only, my Lord Marquis, if you are not my son-in-law."

The Marquis, with low bows, accepted the honor which his Majesty conferred upon him. And forthwith that very same day married the Princess.

Puss became a great Lord, and never ran after mice any more except for his diversion.

## Tom Tit Tot<sup>1</sup>

ONCE upon a time there was a woman, and she baked five pies. And when they came out of the oven, they were that overbaked the crusts were too hard to eat. So she says to her daughter:

"Darter," says she, "put you them there pies on the shelf, and leave 'em there a little, and they'll come again."—She meant, you know, the crust would get soft.

But the girl, she says to herself: "Well, if they'll come again, I'll eat 'em now." And she set to work and ate 'em all, first and last.

Well, come supper-time the woman said: "Go you, and get one o' them there pies. I dare say they've come again now."

The girl went and she looked, and there was nothing but the dishes. So back she came and says she: "Noo, they ain't come again."

"Not one of 'em?" says the mother.

"Not one of 'em," says she.

"Well, come again or not come again," said the woman, "I'll have one for supper."

"But you can't, if they ain't come," said the girl.

"But I can," says she. "Go you, and bring the best of 'em."

"Best or worst," says the girl, "I've ate 'em all, and you can't have one till that's come again."

Well, the woman she was done, and she took her spinning to the door, to spin, and as she spun she sang:

"My darter ha' ate five, five pies to-day.

"My darter ha' ate five, five pies to-day."

The king was coming down the street, and he heard her sing, but what she sang he couldn't hear, so he stopped and said:

"What was that you were singing, my good woman?"

The woman was ashamed to let him hear what her daughter had been doing, so she sang, instead of that:

"My darter ha' spun five, five skeins to-day.

"My darter ha' spun five, five skeins to-day."

"Stars o' mine!" said the king, "I never heard tell of any one that could do that."

Then he said: "Look you here, I want a wife, and I'll marry your daughter. But look you here," says he, "eleven months out of the year

she shall have all she likes to eat, and all the gowns she likes to get, and all the company she likes to keep; but the last month of the year she'll have to spin five skeins every day, and if she don't I shall kill her."

"All right," says the woman; for she thought what a grand marriage that was. And as for the five skeins, when the time came, there'd be plenty of ways of getting out of it, and likeliest, he'd have forgotten all about it.

Well, so they were married. And for eleven months the girl had all she liked to eat, and all the gowns she liked to get, and all the company she liked to keep.

But when the time was getting over, she began to think about the skeins and to wonder if he had 'em in mind. But not one word did he say about 'em, and she thought he'd wholly forgotten 'em.

However, the last day of the last month he takes her to a room she'd never set eyes on before. There was nothing in it but a spinning-wheel and a stool. And says he: "Now, my dear, here you'll be shut in tomorrow with some victuals and some flax, and if you haven't spun five skeins by night, your head'll go off."

And away he went about his business.

Well, she was that frightened, she'd always been such a gatless girl, that she didn't so much as know how to spin, and what was she to do tomorrow with no one to come nigh her to help her? She sat down on a stool in the kitchen, and law! how she did cry!

However, all of a sudden she heard a sort of knocking low down on the door. She upped and oped it, and what should she see but a small little black thing with a long tail. That looked up at her right curious, and that said:

"What are you a-crying for?"

"What's that to you?" says she.

"Never you mind," that said, "but tell me what you're a-crying for."

"That won't do me no good if I do," says she.

"You don't know that," that said, and twirled that's tail round.

"Well," says she, "that won't do no harm, if that don't do no good," and she upped and told about the pies, and the skeins, and everything.

"This is what I'll do," says the little black thing "I'll come to your window every morning and take the flax and bring it spun at night."

"What's your pay?" says she.

That looked out of the corner of that's eyes,

<sup>1</sup>From *English Fairy Tales* by Joseph Jacobs. By permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

and that said: "I'll give you three guesses every night to guess my name, and if you haven't guessed it before the month's up you shall be mine."

Well, she thought she'd be sure to guess that's name before the month was up. "All right," say she, "I agree."

"All right," that says, and law! how that twirled that's tail.

Well, the next day, her husband took her into the room, and there was the flax and the day's food.

"Now, there's the flax," says he, "and if that ain't spun up this night, off goes your head." And then he went out and locked the door.

He'd hardly gone, when there was a knocking against the window.

She upped and she oped it, and there sure enough was the little old thing sitting on the ledge.

"Where's the flax?" says he.

"Here it be," says she. And she gave it to him.

Well, come the evening a knocking came again to the window. She upped and she oped it, and there was the little old thing with five skeins of flax on his arm.

"Here it be," says he, and he gave it to her.

"Now, what's my name?" says he.

"What, is that Bill?" says she.

"Noo, that ain't," says he, and he twirled his tail.

"Is that Ned?" says she.

"Noo, that ain't," says he, and he twirled his tail.

"Well, is that Mark?" says she.

"Noo, that ain't," says he, and he twirled his tail harder, and away he flew.

Well, when her husband came in, there were the five skeins ready for him. "I see I shan't have to kill you tonight, my dear," says he; "you'll have your food and flax in the morning," says he, and away he goes.

Well, every day the flax and the food were brought, and every day that there little black impet used to come mornings and evenings. And all the day the girl sate trying to think of names to say to it when it came at night. But she never hit on the right one. And as it got towards the end of the month, the impet began to look so malicious, and that twirled that's tail faster and faster each time she gave a guess.

At last it came to the last day but one. The

impet came at night along with the five skeins, and that said:

"What, ain't you got my name yet?"

"Is that Nicodemus?" says she.

"Noo, 't ain't," that says.

"Is that Sammlle?" says she.

"Noo, 't ain't," that says.

"A-well, is that Methusalem?" says she.

"Noo, 't ain't that neither," that says.

Then that looks at her with that's eyes like a coal of fire, and that says: "Woman, there's only tomorrow night, and then you'll be mine!" And away it flew.

Well, she felt that horrid. However, she heard the king coming along the passage. In he came, and when he sees the five skeins, he says, says he:

"Well, my dear," says he. "I don't see but what you'll have your skeins ready tomorrow night as well, and as I reckon I shan't have to kill you, I'll have supper in here tonight." So they brought supper, and another stool for him, and down the two sate.

Well, he hadn't eaten but a mouthful or so, when he stops and begins to laugh.

"What is it?" says she.

"A-why," says he, "I was out a-hunting today, and I got away to a place in the wood I'd never seen before. And there was an old chalk-pit. And I heard a kind of a sort of humming. So I got off my hobby, and I went right quiet to the pit, and I looked down. Well, what should there be but the funniest little black thing you ever set eyes on. And what was that doing, but that had a little spinning-wheel and that was spinning wonderful fast, and twirling that's tail. And as that span that sang:

"Nimmy nimmy not

My name's Tom Tit Tot."

Well, when the girl heard this, she felt as if she could have jumped out of her skin for joy, but she didn't say a word.

Next day that there little thing looked so malicious when he came for the flax. And when night come she heard that knocking against the window panes. She oped the window, and that come right in on the ledge. That was grinning from ear to ear, and Oo! that's tail was twirling round so fast.

"What's my name?" that says, as that gave her the skeins.

"Is that Solomon?" she says, pretending to be afraid.

"Noo, 't ain't," that says, and that came further into the room.

"Well, is that Zebedee?" says she again.

"Noo, 't ain't," says the impter. And then that laughed and twirled that's tail till you couldn't hardly see it.

"Take time, woman," that says; "next guess, and you're mine." And that stretched out that's black hands at her.

Well, she backed a step or two, and she looked at it, and then she laughed out, and says she, pointing her finger at it:

"Nimmy nimmy not  
Your name's Tom Tit Tot."

Well, when that heard her, that gave an awful shriek and away that flew into the dark, and she never saw it any more.

### Tattercoats<sup>1</sup>

IN a great Palace by the sea there once dwelt a very rich old lord, who had neither wife nor children living, only one little granddaughter, whose face he had never seen in all her life. He hated her bitterly, because at her birth his favourite daughter died; and when the old nurse brought him the baby he swore that it might live or die as it liked, but he would never look on its face as long as it lived.

So he turned his back, and sat by his window looking out over the sea, and weeping great tears for his lost daughter, till his white hair and beard grew down over his shoulders and twined round his chair and crept into the chinks of the floor, and his tears, dropping on to the window-ledge, wore a channel through the stone, and ran away in a little river to the great sea. Meanwhile, his granddaughter grew up with no one to care for her, or clothe her; only the old nurse, when no one was by, would sometime give her a dish of scraps from the kitchen, or a torn petticoat from the ragbag; while the other servants of the palace would drive her from the house with blows and mocking words, calling her "Tattercoats," and pointing to her bare feet and shoulders, till she ran away, crying, to hide among the bushes.

So she grew up, with little to eat or to wear, spending her days out of doors, her only com-

panion a crippled gooseherd, who fed his flock of geese on the common. And this gooseherd was a queer, merry, little chap and, when she was hungry, or cold, or tired, he would play to her so gaily on his little pipe, that she forgot all her troubles, and would fall to dancing with his flock of noisy geese for partners.

Now one day people told each other that the king was travelling through the land, and was to give a great ball to all the lords and ladies of the country in the town near by, and that the Prince, his only son, was to choose a wife from amongst the maidens in the company. In due time one of the royal invitations to the ball was brought to the Palace by the sea, and the servants carried it up to the old lord, who still sat by his window, wrapped in his long white hair and weeping into the little river that was fed by his tears.

But when he heard the King's command, he dried his eyes and bade them bring shears to cut him loose, for his hair had bound him a fast prisoner, and he could not move. And then he sent them for rich clothes, and jewels which he put on; and he ordered them to saddle the white horse, with gold and silk, that he might ride to meet the King; but he quite forgot he had a granddaughter to take to the ball.

Meanwhile Tattercoats sat by the kitchen-door weeping, because she could not go to see the grand doings. And when the old nurse heard her crying she went to the Lord of the Palace, and begged him to take his granddaughter with him to the King's ball.

But he only frowned and told her to be silent; while the servants laughed and said, "Tattercoats is happy in her rags, playing with the gooseherd! Let her be—it is all she is fit for."

A second, and then a third time, the old nurse begged him to let the girl go with him, but she was answered only by black looks and fierce words, till she was driven from the room by the jeering servants, with blows and mocking words.

Weeping over her ill-success, the old nurse went to look for Tattercoats; but the girl had been turned from the door by the cook, and had run away to tell her friend the gooseherd how unhappy she was because she could not go to the King's ball.

Now when the gooseherd had listened to her story, he bade her cheer up, and proposed that they should go together into the town to see the

<sup>1</sup>From *English Fairy Tales* retold by Flora Annie Steele, 1918. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.



King, and all the fine things; and when she looked sorrowfully down at her rags and bare feet he played a note or two upon his pipe, so gay and merry, that she forgot all about her tears and her troubles, and before she well knew, the gooseherd had taken her by the hand, and she, and he, and the geese before them, were dancing down the road towards the town.

"Even cripples can dance when they choose," said the gooseherd.

Before they had gone very far a handsome young man, splendidly dressed, riding up, stopped to ask the way to the castle where the King was staying, and when he found that they too were going thither, he got off his horse and walked beside them along the road.

"You seem merry folk," he said, "and will be good company."

"Good company, indeed," said the gooseherd, and played a new tune that was not a dance.

It was a curious tune, and it made the strange young man stare and stare at Tattercoats till he couldn't see her rags. Till he couldn't, to tell the truth, see anything but her beautiful face.

Then he said, "You are the most beautiful maiden in the world. Will you marry me?"

Then the gooseherd smiled to himself, and played sweeter than ever.

But Tattercoats laughed. "Not I," said she, "You would be finely put to shame, and so would I be, if you took a goose-girl for your wife! Go and ask one of the great ladies you will see to-night at the King's ball and do not flout poor Tattercoats."

But the more she refused him the sweeter the pipe played, and the deeper the young man fell in love; till at last he begged her to come that night at twelve to the King's ball, just as she was, with the gooseherd and his geese, in her torn petticoat and bare feet, and see if he wouldn't dance with her before the King, and the lords and ladies, and present her to them all, as his dear and honoured bride.

Now at first Tattercoats said she would not; but the gooseherd said, "Take fortune when it comes, little one."

So when night came, and the hall in the castle was full of light and music, and the lords and ladies were dancing before the King, just as the clock struck twelve, Tattercoats and the gooseherd, followed by his flock of noisy geese, hissing and swaying their heads, entered at the great

doors, and walked straight up the ball-room, while on either side the ladies whispered, the lords laughed, and the King seated at the far end stared in amazement.

But as they came in front of the throne Tattercoats' lover rose from beside the King, and came to meet her. Taking her by the hand, he kissed her thrice before them all, and turned to the King.

"Father!" he said—for it was the Prince himself—"I have made my choice, and here is my bride, the loveliest girl in all the land, and the sweetest as well!"

Before he had finished speaking the gooseherd had put his pipe to his lips and played a few notes that sounded like a bird singing far off in the woods; and as he played Tattercoats' rags were changed to shining robes sewn with glittering jewels, a golden crown lay upon her golden hair, and the flock of geese behind her became a crowd of dainty pages, bearing her long train.

And as the King rose to greet her as his daughter the trumpets sounded loudly in honour of the new Princess, and the people outside in the street said to each other:

"Ah! now the Prince has chosen for his wife the loveliest girl in all the land!"

But the gooseherd was never seen again, and no one knew what became of him; while the old lord went home once more to his Palace by the sea, for he could not stay at Court when he had sworn never to look on his granddaughter's face.

So there he still sits by his window,—if you could only see him, as you may some day,—weeping more bitterly than ever. And his white hair has bound him to the stones, and the river of his tears runs away to the great sea.

## The Frog-King<sup>1</sup>

In olden times when wishing still helped one, there lived a king whose daughters were all beautiful, but the youngest was so beautiful that the sun itself, which has seen so much, was astonished whenever it shone in her face. Close by the King's castle lay a great dark forest, and under an old lime-tree in the forest was a well, and when the day was very warm, the King's child went out into the forest and sat down by

<sup>1</sup>From *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, translated by Margaret Hunt and revised by James Stern, 1944. By permission of Pantheon Books, Inc.

the side of the cool fountain; and when she was bored she took a golden ball, and threw it up on high and caught it; and this ball was her favorite plaything.

Now it so happened that on one occasion the princess's golden ball did not fall into the little hand which she was holding up for it, but on the ground beyond, and rolled straight into the water. The King's daughter followed it with her eyes, but it vanished, and the well was deep, so deep that the bottom could not be seen. At this she began to cry, and cried louder and louder, and could not be comforted. And as she thus lamented, someone said to her: "What ails you, King's daughter? You weep so that even a stone would show pity." She looked round to the side from whence the voice came, and saw a frog stretching forth its big, ugly head from the water. "Ah! old water-splasher, is it you?" said she; "I am weeping for my golden ball, which has fallen into the well."

"Be quiet, and do not weep," answered the frog. "I can help you, but what will you give me if I bring your plaything up again?"

"Whatever you will have, dear frog," said she—"my clothes, my pearls and jewels, and even the golden crown which I am wearing."

The frog answered. "I do not care for your clothes, your pearls and jewels, nor for your golden crown; but if you will love me and let me be your companion and play-fellow, and sit by you at your little table, and eat off your little golden plate, and drink out of your little cup, and sleep in your little bed—if you will promise me this I will go down below, and bring your golden ball up again."

"Oh, yes," said she, "I promise you all you wish, if you will but bring me my ball back again." But she thought: "How the silly frog does talk! All he does is to sit in the water with the other frogs, and croak! He can be no companion to any human being!"

But the frog when he had received this promise, put his head into the water and sank down, and in a short while came swimming up again with the ball in his mouth, and threw it on the grass. The King's daughter was delighted to see her pretty plaything once more, and picked it up, and ran away with it. "Wait, wait," said the frog. "Take me with you. I can't run as you can." But what did it avail him to scream his croak, croak after her, as loudly as he could? She did

not listen to it, but ran home and soon forgot the poor frog, who was forced to go back into his well again.

The next day when she had seated herself at table with the King and all the courtiers, and was eating from her little golden plate, something came creeping splish, splash, splish, splash, up the marble staircase, and when it had got to the top, it knocked at the door and cried: "Princess, youngest princess, open the door for me." She ran to see who was outside, but when she opened the door, there sat the frog in front of it. Then she slammed the door to, in great haste, sat down to dinner again, and was quite frightened. The King saw plainly that her heart was beating violently, and said: "My child, what are you so afraid of? Is there perchance a giant outside who wants to carry you away?" "Ah, no," replied she, "it is no giant, but a disgusting frog."

"What does the frog want with you?" "Ah, dear father, yesterday as I was in the forest sitting by the well, playing, my golden ball fell into the water. And because I cried so, the frog brought it out again for me; and because he so insisted, I promised him he should be my companion, but I never thought he would be able to come out of his water! And now he is outside there, and wants to come in to me."

In the meantime it knocked a second time, and cried:

"Princess! youngest princess!"

Open the door for me!

Do you not know what you said to me

Yesterday by the cool waters of the well?

Princess, youngest princess!

Open the door for me!"

Then said the King: "That which you have promised must you perform. Go and let him in." She went and opened the door, and the frog hopped in and followed her, step by step, to her chair. There he sat and cried: "Lift me up beside you." She delayed, until at last the King commanded her to do it. Once the frog was on the chair he wanted to be on the table, and when he was on the table he said: "Now, push your little golden plate nearer to me that we may eat together." She did this, but it was easy to see that she did not do it willingly. The frog enjoyed what he ate, but almost every mouthful she took choked her. At length he said: "I have

eaten and am satisfied; now I am tired, carry me into your little room and make your little silken bed ready, and we will both lie down and go to sleep."

The King's daughter began to cry, for she was afraid of the cold frog which she did not like to touch, and which was now to sleep in her pretty, clean little bed. But the King grew angry and said: "He who helped you when you were in trouble ought not afterwards to be despised by you." So she took hold of the frog with two fingers, carried him upstairs, and put him in a corner. But when she was in bed he crept to her and said: "I am tired, I want to sleep as well as you, lift me up or I will tell your father." At this she was terribly angry, and took him up and threw him with all her might against the wall. "Now, will you be quiet, odious frog," said she. But when he fell down he was no frog but a king's son with kind and beautiful eyes. He by her father's will was now her dear companion and husband. Then he told her how he had been bewitched by a wicked witch, and how no one could have delivered him from the well but herself, and that tomorrow they would go together into his kingdom. Then they went to sleep, and next morning when the sun awoke them, a carriage came driving up with eight white horses, which had white ostrich feathers on their heads, and were harnessed with golden chains, and behind stood the young King's servant, faithful Henry. Faithful Henry had been so unhappy when his master was changed into a frog, that he had caused three iron bands to be laid around his heart, lest it should burst with grief and sadness. The carriage was to conduct the young King into his kingdom. Faithful Henry helped them both in, and placed himself behind again, and was full of joy because of this deliverance. And when they had driven a part of the way, the King's son heard a cracking behind him as if something had broken. So he turned round and cried: "Henry, the carriage is breaking."

"No, master, it is not the carriage. It is a band from my heart, which was put there in my great pain when you were a frog and imprisoned in the well." Again and once again while they were on their way something cracked, and each time the King's son thought the carriage was breaking; but it was only the bands which were springing from the heart of faithful Henry because his master was set free and happy.

## The Goose-Girl<sup>1</sup>

THERE was once upon a time an old Queen whose husband had been dead for many years, and she had a beautiful daughter. When the princess grew up she was betrothed to a prince who lived at a great distance. When the time came for her to be married, and she had to journey forth into the distant kingdom, the aged Queen packed up for her many costly vessels of silver and gold, and trinkets also of gold and silver; and cups and jewels, in short, everything which appertained to a royal dowry, for she loved her child with all her heart. She likewise sent her maid-in-waiting, who was to ride with her, and hand her over to the bridegroom, and each had a horse for the journey, but the horse of the King's daughter was called Falada, and could speak. So when the hour of parting had come, the aged mother went into her bedroom, took a small knife and cut her finger with it until it bled. Then she held a white handkerchief to it into which she let three drops of blood fall, gave it to her daughter and said: "Dear child, preserve this carefully, it will be of service to you on your way."

So they took a sorrowful leave of each other; the princess put the piece of cloth in her bosom, mounted her horse, and then went away to her bridegroom. After she had ridden for a while she felt a burning thirst, and said to her waiting-maid: "Dismount, and take my cup which you have brought with you for me, and get me some water from the stream, for I should like to drink." "If you are thirsty," said the waiting-maid, "get off your horse yourself, and lie down and drink out of the water, I don't choose to be your servant." So in her great thirst the princess alighted, bent down over the water in the stream and drank, and was not allowed to drink out of the golden cup. Then she said: "Ah, Heaven!" and the three drops of blood answered. "If your mother knew, her heart would break in two." But the King's daughter was humble, said nothing, and mounted her horse again. She rode some miles further, but the day was warm, the sun scorched her, and she was thirsty once more, and when they came to a stream of water, she again cried to her waiting-maid: "Dismount, and give me some water in my golden cup," for she

<sup>1</sup>From *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. By permission of Pantheon Books, Inc.

had long ago forgotten the girl's ill words. But the waiting-maid said still more haughtily: "If you wish to drink, get it yourself, I don't choose to be your maid." Then in her great thirst the King's daughter alighted, bent over the flowing stream, wept and said: "Ah, Heaven!" and the drops of blood again replied: "If this your mother knew, her heart would break in two." And as she was thus drinking and leaning right over the stream, the handkerchief with three drops of blood fell out of her bosom, and floated away with the water without her observing it, so great was her trouble. The waiting-maid, however, had seen it, and she rejoiced to think that she had now power over the bride, for since the princess had lost the drops of blood, she had become weak and powerless. So now when she wanted to mount her horse again, the one that was called Falada, the waiting-maid said: "Falada is more suitable for me, and my nag will do for you," and the princess had to be content with that. Then the waiting-maid, with many hard words, bade the princess exchange her royal apparel for her own shabby clothes; and at length she was compelled to swear by the clear sky above her, that she would not say one word of this to anyone at the royal court, and if she had not taken this oath she would have been killed on the spot. But Falada saw all this, and observed it well.

The waiting-maid now mounted Falada, and the true bride the bad horse, and thus they traveled onwards, until at length they entered the royal palace. There were great rejoicings over her arrival, and the prince sprang forward to meet her, lifted the waiting-maid from her horse, and thought she was his consort. She was conducted upstairs, but the real princess was left standing below. Then the old King looked out of the window and saw her standing in the courtyard, and noticed how dainty and delicate and beautiful she was, and instantly went to the royal apartment, and asked the bride about the girl she had with her who was standing down below in the courtyard, and who she was. "I picked her up on my way for a companion; give the girl something to work at, that she may not stand idle." But the old King had no work for her, and knew of none, so he said: "I have a little boy who tends the geese, she may help him." The boy was called Conrad, and the true bride had to help him tend the geese. Soon afterwards the false bride said to the young

King: "Dearest husband, I beg you to do me a favor." He answered: "I will do so most willingly." "Then send for the knacker, and have the head of the horse on which I rode here cut off, for it vexed me on the way." In reality, she was afraid that the horse might tell how she had behaved to the King's daughter. Then she succeeded in making the King promise that it should be done, and the faithful Falada was to die; this came to the ears of the real princess, and she secretly promised to pay the knacker a piece of gold if he would perform a small service for her. There was a great dark-looking gateway in the town, through which morning and evening she had to pass with the geese: would he be so good as to nail up Falada's head on it, so that she might see him again, more than once. The knacker's man promised to do that, and cut off the head, and nailed it fast beneath the dark gateway.

Early in the morning, when she and Conrad drove out their flock beneath this gateway, she said in passing:

"Alas, Falada, hanging there!"

Then the head answered:

"Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare!

If this your mother knew,

Her heart would break in two."

Then they went still further out of the town, and drove their geese into the country. And when they had come to the meadow, she sat down and unbound her hair which was like pure gold, and Conrad saw it and delighted in its brightness, and wanted to pluck out a few hairs. Then she said:

"Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,

Blow Conrad's little hat away,

And make him chase it here and there,

Until I have braided all my hair,

And bound it up again."

And there came such a violent wind that it blew Conrad's hat far away across country, and he was forced to run after it. When he came back she had finished combing her hair and was putting it up again, and he could not get any of it. Then Conrad was angry, and would not speak to her, and thus they watched the geese until the evening, and then they went home.

Next day when they were driving the geese out through the dark gateway, the maiden said:

"Alas, Falada, hanging there!"

Falada answered:

"Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare!

If this your mother knew,  
Her heart would break in two."

And she sat down again in the field and began to comb out her hair, and Conrad ran and tried to clutch it, so she said in haste:

"Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,  
Blow Conrad's little hat away,  
And make him chase it here and there,  
Until I have braided all my hair,  
And bound it up again."

Then the wind blew, and blew his little hat off his head and far away, and Conrad was forced to run after it, and when he came back, her hair had been put up a long time, and he could get none of it, and so they looked after the geese till evening came.

But in the evening after they had got home, Conrad went to the old King, and said: "I won't tend the geese with that girl any longer!" "Why not?" inquired the aged King. "Oh, because she vexes me the whole day long." Then the aged King commanded him to relate what it was that she did to him. And Conrad said: "In the morning when we pass beneath the dark gateway with the flock, there is a horse's head on the wall, and she says to it:

'Alas, Falada, hanging there!'

And the head replies:

'Alas, young Queen, how ill you fare!

If this your mother knew,

Her heart would break in two.'"

And Conrad went on to relate what happened on the goose pasture and how when there he had to chase his hat.

The aged King commanded him to drive his flock out again next day, and as soon as morning came, he placed himself behind the dark gateway, and heard how the maiden spoke to the head of Falada, and then he too went into the country, and hid himself in the thicket in the meadow. There he soon saw with his own eyes the goose-girl and the goose-boy bringing their flock, and how after a while she sat down and unlaid her hair, which shone with radiance. And soon she said:

"Blow, blow, thou gentle wind, I say,  
Blow Conrad's little hat away,  
And make him chase it here and there,  
Until I have braided all my hair,  
And bound it up again."

Then came a blast of wind and carried off Conrad's hat, so that he had to run far away, while the maiden quietly went on combing and plait-

ing her hair, all of which the King observed. Then, quite unseen, he went away, and when the goose-girl came home in the evening, he called her aside, and asked why she did all these things. "I may not tell that, and I dare not lament my sorrows to any human being, for I have sworn not to do so by the heaven which is above me; if I had not done that, I should have lost my life." He urged her and left her no peace, but he could draw nothing from her. Then said he: "If you will not tell me anything, tell your sorrows to the iron-stove there," and he went away. Then she crept into the iron-stove, and began to weep and lament, and emptied her whole heart, and said: "Here am I deserted by the whole world, and yet I am a King's daughter, and a false waiting-maid has by force brought me to such a pass that I have been compelled to put off my royal apparel, and she has taken my place with my bridegroom, and I have to perform menial service as a goose-girl. If this my mother knew, her heart would break in two."

The aged King, however, was standing outside by the pipe of the stove, and was listening to what she said, and heard it. Then he came back again, and bade her come out of the stove. And royal garments were placed on her, and it was marvellous how beautiful she was! The aged King summoned his son, and revealed to him that he had got the false bride who was only a waiting-maid, but that the true one was standing there, as the former goose-girl. The young King rejoiced with all his heart when he saw her beauty and youth, and a great feast was made ready to which all the people and all good friends were invited. At the head of the table sat the bridegroom with the King's daughter at one side of him, and the waiting-maid on the other, but the waiting-maid was blinded, and did not recognize the princess in her dazzling array. When they had eaten and drunk, and were merry, the aged King asked the waiting-maid as a riddle, what punishment a person deserved who had behaved in such and such a way to her master, and at the same time related the whole story, and asked what sentence such a person merited. Then the false bride said: "She deserves no better fate than to be stripped entirely naked, and put in a barrel which is studded inside with pointed nails, and two white horses should be harnessed to it, which will drag her along through one street after another, till she is dead." "It is you," said the aged

King, "and you have pronounced your own sentence, and thus shall it be done unto you." And when the sentence had been carried out, the young King married his true bride, and both of them reigned over their kingdom in peace and happiness.

## Sadko<sup>1</sup>

IN Novgorod in the old days there was a young man—just a boy he was—the son of a rich merchant who had lost all his money and died. So Sadko was very poor. He had not a kopeck in the world, except what the people gave him when he played his dulcimer for their dancing. He had blue eyes and curling hair, and he was strong, and would have been merry; but it is dull work playing for other folk to dance, and Sadko dared not dance with any young girl, for he had no money to marry on, and he did not want to be chased away as a beggar. And the young women of Novgorod, they never looked at the handsome Sadko. No; they smiled with their bright eyes at the young men who danced with them, and if they ever spoke to Sadko, it was just to tell him sharply to keep the music going or to play faster.

So Sadko lived alone with his dulcimer, and made do with half a loaf when he could not get a whole, and with crust when he had no crumb. He did not mind so very much what came to him, so long as he could play his dulcimer and walk along the banks of the little\* river Volkhov that flows by Novgorod, or on the shores of the lake, making music for himself, and seeing the pale mists rise over the water, and dawn or sunset across the shining river.

"There is no girl in all Novgorod as pretty as my little river," he used to say, and night after night he would sit by the banks of the river or on the shores of the lake, playing the dulcimer and singing to himself.

Sometimes he helped the fishermen on the lake, and they would give him a little fish for his supper in payment for his strong young arms.

And it happened that one evening the fishermen asked him to watch their nets for them on

the shore, while they went off to take their fish to sell them in the square at Novgorod.

Sadko sat on the shore, on a rock, and played his dulcimer and sang. Very sweetly he sang of the fair lake and the lovely river—the little river that he thought prettier than all the girls of Novgorod. And while he was singing he saw a whirlpool in the lake, little waves flying from it across the water, and in the middle a hollow down into the water. And in the hollow he saw the head of a great man with blue hair and a gold crown. He knew that the huge man was the Tzar of the Sea. And the man came nearer, walking up out of the depths of the lake—a huge, great man, a very giant, with blue hair falling to his waist over his broad shoulders. The little waves ran from him in all directions as he came striding up out of the water.

Sadko did not know whether to run or stay; but the Tzar of the Sea called out to him in a great voice like wind and water in a storm,—

"Sadko of Novgorod, you have played and sung many days by the side of this lake and on the banks of the little river Volkhov. My daughters love your music, and it has pleased me too. Throw out a net into the water, and draw it in, and the waters will pay you for your singing. And if you are satisfied with the payment, you must come and play to us down in the green palace of the sea."

With that the Tzar of the Sea went down again into the waters of the lake. The waves closed over him with a roar, and presently the lake was as smooth and calm as it had ever been.

Sadko thought, and said to himself: "Well, there is no harm done in casting out a net." So he threw a net out into the lake.

He sat down again and played on his dulcimer and sang, and when he had finished his singing the dusk had fallen and the moon shone over the lake. He put down his dulcimer and took hold of the ropes of the net, and began to draw it up out of the silver water. Easily the ropes came, and the net, dripping and glittering in the moonlight.

"I was dreaming," said Sadko; "I was asleep when I saw the Tzar of the Sea, and there is nothing in the net at all."

And then, just as the last of the net was coming ashore, he saw something in it, square and dark. He dragged it out, and found it was a coffer. He opened the coffer, and it was full of precious stones—green, red, gold—gleaming

<sup>1</sup>From *Old Peter's Russian Tales* by Arthur Ransome, Thomas Nelson & Sons. Used by permission of the publishers.

\*The Volkhov would be a big river if it were in England, and Sadko and old Peter called it little only because they loved it.

in the light of the moon. Diamonds shone there like little bundles of sharp knives.

"There can be no harm in taking these stones," says Sadko, "whether I dreamed or not."

He took the coffer on his shoulder, and bent under the weight of it, strong though he was. He put it in a safe place. All night he sat and watched by the nets, and played and sang, and planned what he would do.

In the morning the fishermen came, laughing and merry after their night in Novgorod, and they gave him a little fish for watching their nets; and he made a fire on the shore, and cooked it and ate it as he used to do.

"And that is my last meal as a poor man," says Sadko. "Ah me! who knows if I shall be happier?"

Then he set the coffer on his shoulder and tramped away for Novgorod.

"Who is that?" they asked at the gates.

"Only Sadko, the dulcimer player," he replied.

"Turned porter?" said they.

"One trade is as good as another," said Sadko, and he walked into the city. He sold a few of the stones, two at a time, and with what he got for them he set up a booth in the market. Small things led to great, and he was soon one of the richest traders in Novgorod.

And now there was not a girl in the town who could look too sweetly at Sadko. "He has golden hair," says one. "Blue eyes like the sea," says another. "He could lift the world on his shoulders," says a third. A little money, you see, opens everybody's eyes.

But Sadko was not changed by his good fortune. Still he walked and played by the little river Volkhov. When work was done and the traders gone, Sadko would take his dulcimer and play and sing on the banks of the river. And still he said, "There is no girl in all Novgorod as pretty as my little river." Every time he came back from his long voyages—for he was trading far and near, like the greatest of merchants—he went at once to the banks of the river to see how his sweetheart fared. And always he brought some little present for her and threw it into the waves.

For twelve years he lived unmarried in Novgorod, and every year made voyages, buying and selling, and always growing richer and richer. Many were the mothers of Novgorod who would have liked to see him married to their daughters. Many were the pillows that were wet

with the tears of the young girls, as they thought of the blue eyes of Sadko and his golden hair.

And then, in the twelfth year since he walked into Novgorod with the coffer on his shoulder, he was sailing a ship on the Caspian Sea, far, far away. For many days the ship sailed on, and Sadko sat on deck and played his dulcimer and sang of Novgorod and of the little river Volkhov that flows under the walls of the town. Blue was the Caspian Sea, and the waves were like furrows in a field, long lines of white under the steady wind, while the sails swelled and the ship shot over the water.

And suddenly the ship stopped.

In the middle of the sea, far from land, the ship stopped and trembled in the waves, as if she were held by a big hand.

"We are aground!" cry the sailors; and the captain, the great one, tells them to take soundings. Seventy fathoms by the bow it was, and seventy fathoms by the stern.

"We are not aground," says the captain, "unless there is a rock sticking up like a needle in the middle of the Caspian Sea!"

"There is magic in this," say the sailors.

"Hoist more sail," says the captain; and up go the white sails, swelling out in the wind, while the masts bend and creak. But still the ship lay shivering, and did not move, out there in the middle of the sea.

"Hoist more sail yet," says the captain; and up go the white sails, swelling and tugging, while the masts creak and groan. But still the ship lay there shivering and did not move.

"There is an unlucky one aboard," says an old sailor. "We must draw lots and find him, and throw him overboard into the sea."

The other sailors agreed to this. And still Sadko sat, and played his dulcimer and sang.

The sailors cut pieces of string, all of a length, as many as there were souls in the ship, and one of those strings they cut in half. Then they made them into a bundle, and each man plucked one string. And Sadko stopped his playing for a moment to pluck a string, and his was the string that had been cut in half.

"Magician, sorcerer, unclean one!" shouted the sailors.

"Not so," said Sadko. "I remember now an old promise I made, and I keep it willingly."

He took his dulcimer in his hand, and leapt from the ship into the blue Caspian Sea. The waves had scarcely closed over his head before

the ship shot forward again, and flew over the waves like a swan's feather, and came in the end safely to her harbour.

"And what happened to Sadko?" asked Maroosia.

"You shall hear, little pigeon," said old Peter, and he took a pinch of snuff. Then he went on.

Sadko dropped into the waves, and the waves closed over him. Down he sank, like a pebble thrown into a pool, down and down. First the water was blue, then green, and strange fish with goggle eyes and golden fins swam round him as he sank. He came at last to the bottom of the sea.

And there, on the bottom of the sea, was a palace built of green wood. Yes, all the timbers of all the ships that have been wrecked in all the seas of the world are in that palace, and they are all green, and cunningly fitted together, so that the palace is worth a ten days' journey only to see it. And in front of the palace Sadko saw two big kobbly sturgeons, each a hundred and fifty feet long, lashing their tails and guarding the gates. Now, sturgeons are the oldest of all fish, and these were the oldest of all sturgeons.

Sadko walked between the sturgeons and through the gates of the palace. Inside there was a great hall, and the Tzar of the Sea lay resting in the hall, with his gold crown on his head and his blue hair floating round him in the water, and his great body covered with scales lying along the hall. The Tzar of the Sea filled the hall—and there is room in that hall for a village. And there were fish swimming this way and that in and out of the windows.

"Ah, Sadko," says the Tzar of the Sea, "you took what the sea gave you, but you have been a long time in coming to sing in the palaces of the sea. Twelve years I have lain here waiting for you."

"Great Tzar, forgive," says Sadko.

"Sing now," says the Tzar of the Sea, and his voice was like the beating of waves.

And Sadko played on his dulcimer and sang.

He sang of Novgorod and of the little river Volkhov which he loved. It was in his song that none of the girls of Novgorod were as pretty as the little river. And there was the sound of wind over the lake in his song, the sound of ripples under the prow of a boat, the sound of ripples on the shore, the sound of the river flowing past the tall reeds, the whispering sound of the river at night. And all the time he played cunningly

on the dulcimer. The girls of Novgorod had never danced to so sweet a tune when in the old days Sadko played his dulcimer to earn kopecks and crusts of bread.

Never had the Tzar of the Sea heard such music.

"I would dance," said the Tzar of the Sea, and he stood up like a tall tree in the hall.

"Play on," said the Tzar of the Sea, and he strode through the gates. The sturgeons guarding the gates stirred the water with their tails.

And if the Tzar of the Sea was huge in the hall, he was huger still when he stood outside on the bottom of the sea. He grew taller and taller, towering like a mountain. His feet were like small hills. His blue hair hung down to his waist, and he was covered with green scales. And he began to dance on the bottom of the sea.

Great was that dancing. The sea boiled, and ships went down. The waves rolled as big as houses. The sea overflowed its shores, and whole towns were under water as the Tzar danced mightily on the bottom of the sea. Hither and thither rushed the waves, and the very earth shook at the dancing of that tremendous Tzar.

He danced till he was tired, and then he came back to the palace of green wood, and passed the sturgeons, and shrank into himself and came through the gates into the hall, where Sadko still played on his dulcimer and sang.

"You have played well and given me pleasure," says the Tzar of the Sea. "I have thirty daughters, and you shall choose one and marry her, and be a Prince of the Sea."

"Better than all maidens I love my little river," says Sadko; and the Tzar of the Sea laughed and threw his head back, with his blue hair floating all over the hall.

And then there came in the thirty daughters of the Tzar of the Sea. Beautiful they were, lovely, and graceful; but twenty-nine of them passed by, and Sadko fingered his dulcimer and thought of his little river.

There came in the thirtieth, and Sadko cried out aloud. "Here is the only maiden in the world as pretty as my little river!" says he. And she looked at him with eyes that shone like stars reflected in the river. Her hair was dark, like the river at night. She laughed, and her voice was like the flowing of the river.

"And what is the name of your little river?" says the Tzar.



"It is the little river Volkhov that flows by Novgorod," says Sadko; "but your daughter is as fair as the little river, and I would gladly marry her if she will have me."

"It is a strange thing," says the Tzar, "but Volkhov is the name of my youngest daughter."

He put Sadko's hand in the hand of his youngest daughter, and they kissed each other. And as they kissed, Sadko saw a necklace round her neck, and knew it for one he had thrown into the river as a present for his sweetheart.

She smiled, and "Come!" says she, and took him away to a palace of her own, and showed him a coffer; and in that coffer were bracelets and rings and earrings—all the gifts that he had thrown into the river.

And Sadko laughed for joy, and kissed the youngest daughter of the Tzar of the Sea, and she kissed him back.

"O my little river!" says he; "there is no girl in all the world but thou as pretty as my little river."

Well, they were married, and the Tzar of the Sea laughed at the wedding feast till the palace shook and the fish swam off in all directions.

And after the feast Sadko and his bride went off together to her palace. And before they slept she kissed him very tenderly, and she said,—

"O Sadko, you will not forget me? You will play to me sometimes, and sing?"

"I shall never lose sight of you, my pretty one," says he; "and as for music, I will sing and play all the day long."

"That's as may be," says she, and they fell asleep.

And in the middle of the night Sadko happened to turn in bed, and he touched the Princess with his left foot, and she was cold, cold, cold as ice in January. And with that touch of cold he woke, and he was lying under the walls of Novgorod, with his dulcimer in his hand, and one of his feet was in the little river Volkhov, and the moon was shining.

"O grandfather! And what happened to him after that?" asked Maroosia.

"There are many tales," said old Peter. "Some say he went into the town, and lived on alone until he died. But I think with those who say that he took his dulcimer and swam out into the middle of the river, and sank under water again, looking for his little Princess. They say he found her, and lives still in the green palaces of the bottom of the sea; and when there is a big

storm, you may know that Sadko is playing on his dulcimer and singing, and that the Tzar of the Sea is dancing his tremendous dance, down there, on the bottom, under the waves."

"Yes, I expect that's what happened," said Ivan. "He'd have found it very dull in Novgorod, even though it is a big town."

## Pecos Bill and His Bouncing Bride<sup>1</sup>

THERE were two loves in the life of Pecos Bill. The first was his horse Widow-Maker, a beautiful creamy white mustang. The second was a girl, a pretty, gay creature named Blue-Foot Sue.

Widow-Maker was the wildest pony in the West. He was the son of the White Mustang. Like his father he had a proud spirit which refused to be broken. For many years cowboys and *vaqueros* had tried to capture him. At last Pecos Bill succeeded. He had a terrible time of it. For a whole week he lay beside a water hole before he could lasso the white pony. For another week he had to ride across the prairies, in and out of canyons and briar patches, before he could bring the pony to a walk. It was a wild ride indeed. But after Bill's ride on the cyclone it was nothing.

At last the white stallion gave up the struggle. Pecos parted his neck gently and spoke to him in horse language. 'I hope you will not be offended,' he began as politely as possible, 'but beauty such as yours is rare, even in this glorious state of Texas. I have no wish to break your proud spirit. I feel that together you and I would make a perfect team. Will you not be my partner at the I.X.L. Ranch?'

The horse neighed sadly. 'It must be,' he sighed. 'I must give up my freedom. But since I must, I am glad that you are the man who has conquered me. Only Pecos Bill is worthy to fix a saddle upon the son of the great White Stallion, the Ghost King of the Prairie.'

'I am deeply honored,' said Pecos Bill, touched in his heart by the compliment.

'It is rather myself who am honored,' replied the mustang, taking a brighter view of the situation.

The two of them went on for several hours

<sup>1</sup>From *Pecos Bill* by James C. Bowman as adapted in *Yankee Doodle's Cousins* by Anne Malcolmson, 1941. By permission of Albert Whitman & Company and Houghton Mifflin Company.

saying nice things to each other. Before they were through, the pony was begging Pecos to be his master. Pecos was weeping and saying he was not fit to ride so magnificent a beast. In the end, however, Pecos Bill made two solemn promises. He would never place a bit in the pony's mouth. No other human would ever sit in his saddle.

When Bill rode back to I.X.L. with his new mount, the second promise was broken. Old Satan, the former bad man, had not completely recovered from his badness. He was jealous of Bill. When he saw the beautiful white stallion he turned green and almost burst with jealousy. One night he stole out to the corral. Quietly he slipped up beside the horse and jumped into the saddle.

Pegasus, as the horse was called, knew right away that his rider was not Pecos Bill. He lifted his four feet off the ground and bent his back into a perfect semicircle. Old Satan flew off like an arrow from a bow. He flew up into the air, above the moon, and came down with a thud on the top of Pike's Peak. There he sat howling with pain and fright until the boys at I.X.L. spotted him.

Bill was angry. He knew, however, that Old Satan had had enough punishment. In his kind heart he could not allow the villain to suffer any more than he had to. So he twirled his lasso around his head, let it fly, and roped Old Satan back to the Texas ranch. The former desperado never tried to be bad again.

The cowhands were so impressed by the pony's bucking they decided to change his name. From that time on they dropped the name of Pegasus and called him Widow-Maker. It suited him better.

The story of Bill's other love, Slue-Foot Sue, is a long one. It began with the tale of the Perpetual Motion Ranch. Bill had bought a mountain from Paul Bunyan. It looked to him like a perfect mountain for a ranch. It was shaped like a cone, with smooth sides covered with grassy meadows. At the top it was always winter. At the bottom it was always summer. In between it was always spring and fall. The sun always shone on one side; the other was always in shade. The cattle could have any climate they wished.

Bill had to breed a special kind of steer for his ranch. These had two short legs on one side and two long legs on the other. By traveling

in one direction around the mountain, they were able to stand up straight on the steep sides.

The novelty wore off, however, and at last Bill sold the Perpetual Motion Ranch to an English duke. The day that the I.X.L. boys moved out, the lord moved in. He brought with him trainload after trainload of fancy English things. He had featherbeds and fine china and oil paintings and real silver and linen tablecloths and silk rugs. The cowboys laughed themselves almost sick when they saw these dude things being brought to a cattle ranch.

Pecos Bill didn't laugh. He didn't even notice the fancy things. All he could see was the English duke's beautiful daughter. She was as pretty as the sun and moon combined. Her hair was silky and red. Her eyes were blue. She wore a sweeping taffeta dress and a little poke bonnet with feathers on it. She was the loveliest creature Pecos Bill had ever seen.

She was as lively and gay as she was pretty. Bill soon discovered that Slue-Foot Sue was a girl of talent. Before anyone could say 'Jack Robinson,' she changed into a cowboy suit and danced a jig to the tune of 'Get Along, Little Dogies.'

Bill soon lost all his interest in cowpunching. He spent his afternoons at the Perpetual Motion Ranch, teaching Sue to ride a broncho. Sue could ride as well as anyone, but she pretended to let him teach her. After several months of Bill's lessons, she put on a show. She jumped onto the back of a huge catfish in the Rio Grande River and rode all the way to the Gulf of Mexico, bareback. Bill was proud of her. He thought she had learned her tricks all from him.

Sue's mother was terribly upset by her daughter's behavior. She didn't care much for Bill. She was very proper. It was her fondest hope that Sue would stop being a tomboy and marry an earl or a member of Parliament.

As soon as she realized that her daughter was falling in love with a cowboy, she was nearly heartbroken. There was nothing she could do about it, however. Slue-Foot Sue was a headstrong girl who always had her own way.

At last the duchess relented. She invited Bill to tea and began to lecture him on English manners. She taught him how to balance a teacup, how to bow from the waist, and how to eat scones and marmalade instead of beans and bacon. He learned quickly, and soon the duchess was pleased with him. She called him 'Colonel.'

When the boys from the IXL Ranch saw what was going on they were disgusted. Here was their boss, their brave, big, cyclone-riding Pecos Bill, mooning around in love like a sick puppy. They laughed at his dude manners. They made fun of his dainty appetite. When he dressed up in his finery to call on his girl, they stood in the bunkhouse door. They simpered and raised their eyebrows and said to one another, 'La-dee-da, dearie, ain't we fine today!'

But for all their kidding they were broken-hearted. None of them had anything against Sue. They admired the way she rode a horse and played a guitar and danced a jig. But the thought of losing Bill to a woman was too much. Even worse was the thought that Bill might get married and bring a woman home to live with them. That was awful.

In spite of their teasing and the duchess's lessons, Bill asked Slue-Foot Sue to marry him. She accepted before he could back out. Her father, the lord, had always liked Bill and was terribly pleased at the match.

On his wedding day Pecos Bill shone like the sun in his new clothes. His boys were dressed in their finest chaps and boots for the occasion. Half of them were going to be groomsmen. The other half were going to be bridesmen. At first Bill asked them to be bridesmaids, but they refused. They said that was going too far.

They rode to the Perpetual Motion Ranch in a fine procession, Bill at the head on Widow-Maker. The white horse pranced and danced with excitement.

At the ranch house waited the rest of the wedding party. The lord had sent back to England for a bishop to perform the ceremony. There stood His Eminence in his lace robes. On his one hand stood the duke in a cutaway coat. On his other hand stood the duchess in a stiff purple gown right from Paris.

Down the stairs came the bride. She was a vision of beauty. She wore a white satin dress cut in the latest fashion. It had a long lace train, but its chief glory was a bustle. A bustle was a wire contraption that fitted under the back of the dress. It made the skirt stand out and was considered very handsome in those days.

As Slue-Foot Sue danced down the steps even the cowhands forgot their sorrow. They jumped down from their horses and swept their sombreros from their heads. Pecos Bill lost his head. He leapt down from the Widow-Maker and ran

to meet her. 'You are lovely,' he murmured. I promise to grant you every wish you make.'

That was a mistake. A devilish gleam twinkled in Sue's eye. For months she had been begging Bill to let her ride Widow-Maker. Bill, of course, had always refused.

Now Sue saw her chance. Before she allowed the wedding to proceed, she demanded that Bill give her one ride on his white mustang.

'No, no!' cried Pecos Bill. Before he could stop her Sue dashed down the drive and placed her dainty foot into the stirrup. The duchess screamed. The bishop turned pale.

Widow-Maker gave an angry snort. This was the second time the promise to him had been broken. He lifted his four feet off the ground and arched his back. Up, up, up shot Slue-Foot Sue. She disappeared into the clouds.

'Catch her, catch her!' roared Bill at the boys. They spread themselves out into a wide circle. Then from the sky came a scream like a siren. Down, down, down fell Sue. She hit the earth with a terrible force. She landed on her bustle. The wire acted as a spring. It bounced. Up again she flew.

Up and down, up and down between the earth and sky Sue bounced like a rubber ball. Every time she fell her bustle hit first. Back she bounced. This went on for a week. When at last she came back to earth to stay, she was completely changed. She no longer loved Pecos Bill.

The wedding was called off and the boys returned to the IXL with their unhappy boss. For months he refused to eat. He lost interest in cowpunching. He was the unhappiest man Texas had ever seen.

At last he called his hands together and made a long speech. He told them that the days of real cowpunching were over. The prairie was being fenced off by farmers. These 'nesters,' as he called them, were ruining the land for the ranchers. He was going to sell his herd.

The IXL had its last roundup. Bill gathered all the prime steers together and put them on the train for Kansas City. Then he divided the cows and calves among his boys. He himself mounted Widow-Maker and rode away.

The boys hated to see him go, but they knew how he felt. 'Nesters' or no 'nesters,' the real reason for his going was his broken heart.

None of them ever saw him again. Some of them thought he had gone back to the coyotes. Others had an idea that Slue-Foot Sue had

changed her mind and that she and Bill were setting up housekeeping in some private canyon. But they never knew.

Some years later an old cowhand claimed that Bill had died. The great cowpuncher had met a dude rancher at a rodeo. The dude was dressed up in an outfit he had bought from a movie cowboy. The dude's chaps were made of doeskin. His boots were painted with landscapes and had heels three inches high. The brim of his hat was broad enough to cover a small circus. Bill took a good look at him and died laughing.

## The Hare That Ran Away<sup>1</sup>

AND it came to pass that the Buddha (to be) was born again as a Lion. Just as he had helped his fellow-men, he now began to help his fellow-animals, and there was a great deal to be done. For instance, there was a little nervous Hare who was always afraid that something dreadful was going to happen to her. She was always saying: "Suppose the Earth were to fall in, what would happen to me?" And she said this so often that at last she thought it really was about to happen. One day, when she had been saying over and over again, "Suppose the Earth were to fall in, what would happen to me?" she heard a slight noise: it really was only a heavy fruit which had fallen upon a rustling leaf, but the little Hare was so nervous she was ready to believe anything, and she said in a frightened tone: "The Earth *is* falling in." She ran away as fast as she could go, and presently she met an old brother Hare, who said: "Where are you running to, Mistress Hare?"

And the little Hare said: "I have no time to stop and tell you anything. The Earth is falling in, and I am running away."

"The Earth is falling in, is it?" said the old brother Hare, in a tone of much astonishment; and he repeated this to *his* brother hare, and *he* to *his* brother hare, and *he* to *his* brother hare, until at last there were a hundred thousand brother hares, all shouting: "The Earth is falling in." Now presently the bigger animals began to take the cry up. First the deer, and then the sheep, and then the wild boar, and then the buffalo, and then the camel, and then the tiger, and then the elephant.

<sup>1</sup>Taken from *Eastern Stories and Legends* by Marie Shedlock, published and copyrighted by E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., New York, 1920

Now the wise Lion heard all this noise and wondered at it. "There are no signs," he said, "of the Earth falling in. They must have heard something." And then he stopped them all short and said: "What is this you are saying?"

And the Elephant said: "I remarked that the Earth was falling in."

"How do you know this?" asked the Lion.

"Why, now I come to think of it, it was a Tiger that remarked it to me."

And the Tiger said: "I had it from the Camel," and the Camel said: "I had it from the Buffalo." And the buffalo from the wild boar, and the wild boar from the sheep, and the sheep from the deer, and the deer from the hares, and the Hares said: "Oh! we heard it from *that* little Hare."

And the Lion said: "Little Hare, *what* made you say that the Earth was falling in?"

And the little Hare said: "I saw it."

"You saw it?" said the Lion. "Where?"

"Yonder, by the tree."

"Well," said the Lion, "come with me and I will show you how—"

"No, no," said the Hare, "I would not go near that tree for anything, I'm so nervous."

"But," said the Lion, "I am going to take you on my back." And he took her on his back, and begged the animals to stay where they were until they returned. Then he showed the little Hare how the fruit had fallen upon the leaf, making the noise that had frightened her, and she said: "Yes, I see—the Earth is *not* falling in." And the Lion said: "Shall we go back and tell the other animals?" And they went back. The little Hare stood before the animals and said: "The Earth is *not* falling in." And all the animals began to repeat this to one another, and they dispersed gradually, and you heard the words more and more softly:

"The Earth is *not* falling in," etc., etc., etc., until the sound died away altogether.

## Phaethon<sup>1</sup>

BORNE by luminous pillars, the palace of the sun-god rose lustrous with gold and flame-red rubies. The cornice was of dazzling ivory, and carved in relief on the wide silver doors were

<sup>1</sup>From *Gods and Heroes* by Gustav Schwab, translated by Olga Marx and Ernst Morwitz, 1946. By permission of Pantheon Books, Inc.

legends and miracle tales. To this beautiful place came Phaethon, son of Phoebus, and asked for his father, the sun-god. He dared not approach too closely, but stopped at a little distance, because he could not endure that glittering, burning nearness.

Phoebus, robed in crimson, was seated on his throne adorned with matchless emeralds. To the right and the left of him stood his retinue ranged in appointed order: the Day, the Month, the Year, the Centuries, and the Seasons; young Spring with his filler of flowers, Summer garlanded with sheaves of yellow grain, wine-stained Autumn, and Winter whose locks were white as hail. The all-seeing eyes of Phoebus, in the midst of these, soon noticed the youth, who was gazing at the glory about him in silent amazement. "Why did you undertake this journey?" he asked him. "What brings you to the palace of your father, my son?"

"O father," answered Phaethon, "it is because on earth men are making mock of me and slandering my mother Clymene. They say that I only pretend to be of heavenly origin, and that, in reality, I am the son of a quite ordinary, unknown man. So I have come to beg of you some token which will prove to the world that I am indeed your son."

He paused, and Phoebus laid aside the beams which circled his head and bade him come close. Then he embraced him tenderly, flinging his arms around him, and said: "Clymene, your mother, told you the truth, my son, and I shall never disown you in the face of the world. But to dispel your doubts forever, ask a gift of me. I swear by the Styx, that river in the underworld upon which all gods take their oath, that your wish shall be granted, no matter what it may be."

Phaethon barely waited for his father to finish. "Then make my wildest dream come true!" he cried. "For one whole day let me guide the winged chariot of the sun!"

Fear and sorrow shadowed the god's shining face. Three-four times he shook his radiant head. At last he said: "O son, you beguiled me into speaking rash words. If only I could retract my promise! For you have asked something which is beyond your strength. You are young, you are mortal, but what you crave is granted only to the gods—and not to all of them, for only I am permitted to do what you are so eager to try. Only I can stand on the glowing

axle which showers sparks as it moves through the air. My chariot must travel a steep path. It is a difficult climb for the horses even when they are fresh, at dawn. The middle of the course lies at the zenith of the sky. I tell you that I myself am often shaken with dread when, at such a height, I stand upright in my chariot. My head spins when I look down on the lands and seas so far beneath me. And the last stretch of the way descends sharply and requires a sure hand on the reins. Even Thetis, goddess of the sea, who waits to receive me in her smooth waters, is full of alarm lest I be hurled from the sky. And there is still another peril to consider, for you must remember that heaven turns incessantly and that the driving is against the sweep of its vast rotations. Even if I gave you my chariot, how could you overcome such obstacles? No, dear son, do not insist that I keep my word to you, but mend your wish while there is still time. You can read my concern from my face. Could you but look through my eyes to my heart, heavy with a father's anxiety! Choose anything that earth and heaven have to offer, and by the Styx I swear it shall be yours!—You fling your arms around me? Alas, that it is to ask this dangerous thing!"

The youth pleaded and pleaded, and Phoebus Apollo had, after all, sworn a most sacred oath. So he took his son by the hand and led him to the sun-chariot, the work of Hephaestus Pole, axle, and the rims of the wheels were of gold, the spokes of silver, and the yoke glittered with chrysolite and other precious stones. While Phaethon was still marvelling at this perfect craftsmanship, Dawn awakened in the east and flung wide the doors to her rosy chamber. The stars faded, last of all the morning star, which lingers longest at his post in the heavens, and the horns of the crescent moon paled on the brightening horizon. Now Phoebus ordered the winged Hours to yoke the horses, and they did as he bade, bringing the shining-flanked animals, sated with ambrosia, out of their splendid stalls, and putting them into the gleaming harness. Then the father salved the face of his son with a magic ointment to enable him to withstand the heat of the flames. He crowned his head with sun-rays, sighing all the while, and said warningly: "Child, spare the goad and use the reins, for the horses will run of themselves, and your labor will lie

in slowing their flight. The course slants in a wide and shallow curve. Keep away from both the South and the North poles. You will find the road by the tracks the wheels have left. Do not drive too slow, lest the earth catch fire, nor too high, lest you burn up the sky. So go now, if you must! Darkness is passing. Take the reins in your hands, or—dear son, there is still time to give up this folly! Leave the chariot to me, and let me shed the light on the world. Be content to watch!”

The boy scarcely heard what his father said. One spring, and he was up in the chariot, exultant at having the reins in his own hands. He only nodded and smiled his thanks to unhappy Phoebus. The four winged horses neighed, and the air kindled with their burning breath. In the meantime Thetis, knowing nothing of her grandchild's venture, opened wide her portals, the vast spaces of the world lay before Phaethon's eyes, and the horses bounded up the course and broke through the mists of morning.

But soon they felt that their burden was lighter than usual, and like ships which toss on the ocean when the hold is not heavy with cargo, the chariot reeled and floundered through the air and swerved aimlessly, as though it were empty. When the horses became aware of this, they wheeled from the beaten paths of the sky and jostled each other in savage haste. Phaethon began to tremble. He did not know which way to pull the reins, he did not know where he was, nor could he curb the animals straining from him with headlong speed. When he looked down from the arch of the heavens and saw the land spread out so far below, his cheeks grew pale and his knees shook with terror. He glanced back over his shoulder, and much of the sky lay in his wake, he turned forward, and more loomed ahead. In his mind he measured the vast reaches before and behind, and not knowing what to do he stared into space. His helpless hands neither slackened nor tightened the reins. He wanted to call to the horses but did not know their names. He saw the many constellations strewn at their strange shapes, like those of monsters. Chill with despair he dropped the reins, and instantly the horses shied from their course, leaping sidewise into unfamiliar regions of air. Now they sprang forward, now they plunged

down. Now they rushed against the fixed stars, and now they slanted toward earth. They grazed against drifts of cloud, which kindled and began to smoulder. Lower and lower hurtled the chariot until the wheels touched the tall mountains. The earth panted and cracked with heat, the saps were dried out of growing things, and suddenly everything began to flicker. The heather yellowed and drooped. The leaves of the forest trees shrivelled and burst into flame. The fire sped on to the plains and scorched the harvests. Entire cities went up in smoke, and whole countries with all their peoples burned to cinders. Hills were consumed, and woods, and mountains. They say that it was then the skin of the Ethiopians turned black. Rivers ran dry or streamed backwards to regain their sources. The sea itself shrank and narrowed so that what its waters had only lately covered was now nothing but dry sand.

The world was afire, and Phaethon began to suffer from the intolerable heat. Every breath he drew seemed to come from a seething furnace, and the chariot seared the soles of his feet. He was tortured with fumes and blasts of ashes cast up by the burning earth. Smoke black as pitch surged around him, while the horses jounced and tossed him hither and thither. And then his hair caught fire. He fell from the chariot and whirled through space like a shooting star, such as sometimes trails its brightness through the clear sky. Far from his home the broad river Eridanus received him and closed over his throbbing limbs.

His father, the sun-god, who had witnessed the sight of destruction, veiled his radiant head and brooded in sorrow. It is said that this day brought no light to the world. Only the great conflagration shone far and wide.

### Daedalus<sup>1</sup>

THE labyrinth from which Theseus escaped by means of the clew of Ariadne was built by Daedalus, a most skilful artificer. It was an edifice with numberless winding passages and turnings opening into one another, and seeming to have neither beginning nor end, like the river Maeander, which returns on itself, and

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flows now onward, now backward, in its course to the sea. Daedalus built the labyrinth for King Minos, but afterwards lost the favour of the king, and was shut up in a tower.

He contrived to make his escape from his prison, but could not leave the island by sea, as the king kept strict watch on all the vessels, and permitted none to sail without being carefully searched. "Minos may control the land and sea," said Daedalus, "but not the regions of the air. I will try that way." So he set to work to fabricate wings for himself and his young son Icarus.

He wrought feathers together, beginning with the smallest and adding larger, so as to form an increasing surface. The larger ones he ~~secured with thread~~ and the smaller with wax, and gave the whole a gentle curvature like the wings of a bird. Icarus, the boy, stood and looked on, sometimes running to gather up the feathers which the wind had blown away, and then handling the wax and working it over with his fingers, by his play impeding his father in his labours.

When at last the work was done, the artist, waving his wings, found himself buoyed upward, and hung suspended, poising himself on the beaten air. He next equipped his son in the same manner and taught him how to fly, as a bird tempts her young ones from the lofty nest into the air. When all was prepared for flight he said, "Icarus, my son, I charge you to keep at a moderate height, for if you fly too low the damp will clog your wings, and if too high the heat will melt them. Keep near me and you will be safe." While he gave him these instructions and fitted the wings to his shoulders, the face of the father was wet with tears, and his hands trembled.

He kissed the boy, not knowing that it was for the last time. Then rising on his wings, he flew off, encouraging him to follow, and looked back from his own flight to see how his son managed his wings. As they flew the ploughman stopped his work to gaze, and the shepherd leaned on his staff and watched them, astonished at the sight, and thinking they were gods who could thus cleave the air.

They passed Samos and Delos on the left and Lebynthos on the right when the boy, exulting in his career, began to leave the guidance of his companion and soar upward as if to reach heaven. The nearness of the blazing sun softened

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"... with melting wax and loosened strings  
Sunk hapless Icarus on unfaithful wings;  
Headlong he rushed through the affrighted air,  
With limbs distorted and dishevelled hair;  
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O'er his pale corpse their pearly sea-flowers shed,  
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### Little John and the Tanner of Blyth<sup>1</sup>

It often comes about in this world that unlucky happenings fall upon one in such measure that it seems, as the saying is, that every cat that one strokes flies into one's face. Thus it was with Robin Hood and Little John one bright day in the merry Maytime; so listen and you shall hear how Dame Luck so buffeted them that their bones were sore for many a day thereafter.

One fine day, not long after Little John had left abiding with the Sheriff and had come back, with his worship's cook, to the merry greenwood, as has just been told, Robin Hood and a few chosen fellows of his band lay upon the soft sward beneath the greenwood tree where they dwelt. The day was warm and sultry, so that whilst most of the band were scattered through the forest upon this mission and upon that, these few stout fellows lay lazily beneath the shade of the tree, in the soft after-

<sup>1</sup>From *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle, copyright 1933 by Charles Scribner's Sons; used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

in slowing their flight. The course slants in a wide and shallow curve. Keep away from both the South and the North poles. You will find the road by the tracks the wheels have left. Do not drive too slow, lest the earth catch fire, nor too high, lest you burn up the sky. So go now, if you must! Darkness is passing. Take the reins in your hands, or—dear son, there is still time to give up this folly! Leave the chariot to me, and let me shed the light on the world. Be content to watch!”

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Darwin.

### Little John and the Tanner of Blyth<sup>1</sup>

It often comes about in this world that unlucky happenings fall upon one in such measure that it seems, as the saying is, that every cat that one strokes flies into one's face. Thus it was with Robin Hood and Little John one bright day in the merry Maytime; so listen and you shall hear how Dame Luck so buffeted them that their bones were sore for many a day thereafter.

One fine day, not long after Little John had left abiding with the Sheriff and had come back, with his worship's cook, to the merry greenwood, as has just been told, Robin Hood and a few chosen fellows of his band lay upon the soft sward beneath the greenwood tree where they dwelt. The day was warm and sultry, so that whilst most of the band were scattered through the forest upon this mission and upon that, these few stout fellows lay lazily beneath the shade of the tree, in the soft after-

<sup>1</sup>From *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood* by Howard Pyle, copyright 1933 by Charles Scribner's Sons, used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

noon, passing jests among themselves and telling merry stories, with laughter and mirth.

All the air was laden with the bitter fragrance of the May, and all the bosky shades of the woodlands beyond rang with the sweet song of birds,—the thrush-cock, the cuckoo, and the wood-pigeon,—and with the song of birds mingled the cool sound of the gurgling brook that leaped out of the forest shades, and ran fretting amid its rough, gray stones across the sunlit open glade before the trysting tree. And a fair sight was that halfscore of tall, stout yeomen, all clad in Lincoln green, lying beneath the broad-spreading branches of the great oak tree, amid the quivering leaves of which the sunlight shivered and fell in dancing patches upon the grass.

The good old times have gone by when such men grow as grew then; when sturdy quarter-staff and longbow toughened a man's thews till they were like leather. Around Robin Hood that day there lay the very flower of English yeomanry. Here the great Little John, with limbs as tough as the gnarled oak, yet grown somewhat soft from good living at the Sheriff's house in Nottingham Town; there Will Stutely, his face as brown as a berry from sun and wind, but, for all that, the comeliest yeoman in the mid-country, only excepting Allan a Dale the minstrel, of whom you shall hear anon. Beside these was Will Scathelock, as lank as a greyhound, yet as fleet of foot as a buck of three years' growth; young David of Doncaster, with great stout limbs only less than those of Little John in size, the tender beard of early youth now just feathering his chin, and others of great renown both far and near.

Suddenly Robin Hood smote his knee.

"By Saint Dunstan," quoth he, "I had nigh forgot that quarter-day cometh on apace, and yet no cloth of Lincoln green in all our store. It must be looked to, and that in quick season. Come, busk thee, Little John! stir those lazy bones of thine, for thou must get thee straightway to our good gossip, the draper, Hugh Longshanks of Ancaster. Bid him send us straightway twentyscore yards of fair cloth of Lincoln green; and mayhap the journey may take some of the fat from off thy bones, that thou hast gotten from lazy living at our dear Sheriff's."

"Nay," muttered Little John (for he had heard so much upon this score that he was sore upon

the point), "nay, truly, mayhap I have more flesh upon my joints than I once had, yet, flesh or no flesh, I doubt not that I could still hold my place and footing upon a narrow bridge against e'er a yeoman in Sherwood, or Nottinghamshire, for the matter of that, even though he had no more fat about his bones than thou hast, good master."

At this reply a great shout of laughter went up, and all looked at Robin Hood, for each man knew that Little John spake of a certain fight that happened between their master and himself, through which they first became acquainted.

"Nay," quoth Robin Hood, laughing louder than all, "Heaven forbid that I should doubt thee, for I care for no taste of thy staff myself, Little John. I must needs own that there are those of my band can handle a seven-foot staff more deftly than I; yet no man in all Nottinghamshire can draw gray-goose shaft with my fingers. Nevertheless, a journey to Ancaster may not be ill for thee; so go thou, as I bid, and thou hadst best go this very evening, for since thou hast abided at the Sheriff's many know thy face, and if thou goest in broad daylight, thou mayest get thyself into a coil with some of his worship's men-at-arms. Bide thou here till I bring thee money to pay our good Hugh I warrant he hath no better customers in all Nottinghamshire than we." So saying, Robin left them and entered the forest.

Not far from the trysting tree was a great rock in which a chamber had been hewn, the entrance being barred by a massive oaken door two palms' breadth in thickness, studded about with spikes, and fastened with a great padlock. This was the treasure-house of the band, and thither Robin Hood went, and, unlocking the door, entered the chamber, from which he brought forth a bag of gold, which he gave to Little John, to pay Hugh Longshanks withal, for the cloth of Lincoln green.

Then up got Little John, and, taking the bag of gold, which he thrust into his bosom, he strapped a girdle about his loins, took a stout pikestaff full seven feet long in his hand, and set forth upon his journey.

So he strode whistling along the leafy forest path that led to Fosse Way, turning nether to the right hand nor the left, until at last he came to where the path branched, leading on the one hand onward to Fosse Way, and on the other,

as well Little John knew, to the merry Blue Boar Inn. Here Little John suddenly ceased whistling, and stopped in the middle of the path. First he looked up and then he looked down, and then, tilting his cap over one eye, he slowly scratched the back part of his head. For thus it was: at the sight of these two roads, two voices began to alarum within him, the one crying, "There lies the road to the Blue Boar Inn, a can of brown October, and a merry night with sweet companions such as thou mayst find there"; the other, "There lies the way to Ancaster and the duty thou art sent upon." Now the first of these two voices was far the louder, for Little John had grown passing fond of good living through abiding at the Sheriff's house; so, presently, looking up into the blue sky, across which bright clouds were sailing like silver boats, and swallows skimming in circling flight, quoth he, "I fear me it will rain this evening, so I'll e'en stop at the Blue Boar till it passes by, for I know my good master would not have me wet to the skin." So, without more ado, off he strode down the path that lay the way of his likings. Now there was no sign of any foul weather, but when one wishes to do a thing, as Little John did, one finds no lack of reasons for the doing.

Four merry wags were at the Blue Boar Inn; a butcher, a beggar, and two barefoot friars. Little John heard them singing from afar, as he walked through the hush of the mellow twilight that was now falling over hill and dale. Right glad were they to welcome such a merry blade as Little John. Fresh cans of ale were brought, and with jest and song and merry tales the hours slipped away on fleeting wings. None thought of time or tide till the night was so far gone that Little John put by the thought of setting forth upon his journey again that night, and so bided at the Blue Boar Inn until the morrow.

Now it was an ill piece of luck for Little John that he left his duty for his pleasure, and he paid a great score for it, as we are all apt to do in the same case, as you shall see.

Up he rose at the dawn of the next day, and, taking his stout pikestaff in his hand, he set forth upon his journey once more, as though he would make up for lost time.

In the good town of Blyth there lived a stout tanner, celebrated far and near for feats

of strength and many tough bouts at wrestling and the quarterstaff. For five years he had held the mid-country champion belt for wrestling, till the great Adam o' Lincoln cast him in the ring and broke one of his ribs; but at quarterstaff he had never yet met his match in all the country about. Beside all this, he dearly loved the longbow, and a sly jaunt in the forest when the moon was full and the dun deer in season; so that the King's rangers 'ept a shrewd eye upon him and his doings, for Arthur a Bland's house was apt to have a plenty of meat in it that was more like venison than the law allowed.

Now Arthur had been to Nottingham Town the day before Little John set forth on his errand, there to sell a halfscore of tanned cowhides. At the dawn of the same day that Little John left the Inn, he started from Nottingham, homeward for Blyth. His way led, all in the dewy morn, past the verge of Sherwood Forest, where the birds were welcoming the lovely day with a great and merry jubilee. Across the Tanner's shoulders was slung his stout quarterstaff, ever near enough to him to be gripped quickly, and on his head was a cap of double cowhide, so tough that it could hardly be cloven even by a broadsword.

"Now," quoth Arthur a Bland to himself, when he had come to that part of the road that cut through a corner of the forest, "no doubt at this time of year the dun deer are coming from the forest depths nigher to the open meadow lands. Mayhap I may chance to catch a sight of the dainty brown darlings thus early in the morn." For there was nothing he loved better than to look upon a tripping herd of deer, even when he could not tickle their ribs with a clothyard shaft. Accordingly, quitting the path, he went peeping this way and that through the underbrush, spying now here and now there, with all the wiles of a master woodcraft, and of one who had more than once donned a doublet of Lincoln green.

Now as Little John stepped blithely along, thinking of nothing but of such things as the sweetness of the hawthorn buds that bedecked the hedgerows, or the crab trees that stood here and there all covered with fair pink blossoms, or gazing upward at the lark, that, springing from the dewy grass, hung aloft on quivering wings in the yellow sunlight, pouring forth its song that fell like a falling star from the

sky, his luck led him away from the highway, not far from the spot where Arthur a Bland was peeping this way and that through the leaves of the thickets. Hearing a rustling of the branches, Little John stopped, and presently caught sight of the brown cowhide cap of the Tanner moving amongst the bushes.

"I do much wonder," quoth Little John to himself, "what yon knave is after, that he should go thus peeping and peering about. I verily believe that yon scurvy varlet is no better than a thief, and cometh here after our own and the good King's dun deer." For by much roving in the forest, Little John had come to look upon all the deer in Sherwood as belonging to Robin Hood and his band as much as to good King Harry. "Nay," quoth he again, after a time, "this matter must e'en be looked into." So, quitting the highroad, he also entered the thickets, and began spying around after stout Arthur a Bland.

So for a long time they both of them went hunting about, Little John after the Tanner, and the Tanner after the deer. At last Little John trod upon a stick, which snapped under his foot, whereupon, hearing the noise, the Tanner turned quickly and caught sight of the yeoman. Seeing that the Tanner had spied him out, Little John put a bold face upon the matter.

"Hilloa," quoth he, "what art thou doing here, thou naughty fellow? Who art thou that comest ranging Sherwood's paths? In very sooth thou hast an evil cast of countenance, and I do think, truly, that thou art no better than a thief, and comest after our good King's deer."

"Nay," quoth the Tanner boldly,—for, though taken by surprise, he was not a man to be frightened by big words,—"thou liest in thy teeth. I am no thief, but an honest craftsman. As for my countenance, it is what it is; and for the matter of that, thine own is none too pretty, thou saucy fellow."

"Ha!" quoth Little John, in a great loud voice, "wouldst thou give me backtalk? Now I have a great part of mind to crack thy pate for thee. I would have thee know, fellow, that I am, as it were, one of the King's foresters. Leastwise," muttered he to himself, "I and my friends do take good care of our good sovereign's deer."

"I care not who thou art," answered the bold Tanner, "and unless thou hast many more of thy kind by thee, thou canst never make Arthur a Bland cry 'A mercy.'"

"Is that so?" cried Little John in a rage. "Now, by my faith, thou saucy rogue, thy tongue hath led thee into a pit thou wilt have a sorry time getting out of; for I will give thee such a drubbing as ne'er hast thou had in all thy life before. Take thy staff in thy hand, fellow, for I will not smite an unarmed man."

"Marry come up with a murrain!" cried the Tanner, for he, too, had talked himself into a fume. "Big words ne'er killed so much as a mouse. Who art thou that talkest so freely of cracking the head of Arthur a Bland? If I do not tan thy hide this day as ne'er I tanned a calf's hide in all my life before, split my staff into skewers for lamb's flesh and call me no more brave man! Now look to thyself, fellow!"

"Stay!" said Little John; "let us first measure our cudgels. I do reckon my staff longer than thine, and I would not take vantage of thee by even so much as an inch."

"Nay, I pass not for length," answered the Tanner. "My staff is long enough to knock down a calf; so look to thyself, fellow, I say again."

So, without more ado, each gripped his staff in the middle, and, with fell and angry looks, they came slowly together.

Now news had been brought to Robin Hood how that Little John, instead of doing his bidding, had passed by duty for pleasure, and so had stopped over night with merry company at the Blue Boar Inn, instead of going straight to Ancaster. So, being vexed to his heart by this, he set forth at dawn of day to seek Little John at the Blue Boar, or at least to meet the yeoman on the way, and ease his heart of what he thought of the matter. As thus he strode along in anger, putting together the words he would use to chide Little John, he heard, of a sudden, loud and angry voices, as of men in a rage, passing fell words back and forth from one to the other. At this, Robin Hood stopped and listened. "Surely," quoth he to himself, "that is Little John's voice, and he is talking in anger also. Methinks the other is strange to my ears. Now Heaven forfend that my good trusty Little John should have fallen into the hands of the King's rangers. I must see to this matter, and that quickly."

Thus spoke Robin Hood to himself, all his anger passing away like a breath from the window-pane, at the thought that perhaps his trusty right-hand man was in some danger of his

life. So cautiously he made his way through the thickets whence the voices came, and, pushing aside the leaves, peeped into the little open space where the two men, staff in hand, were coming slowly together.

"Ha!" quoth Robin to himself, "here is merry sport afoot. Now I would give three golden angels from my own pocket if yon stout fellow would give Little John a right sound drubbing! It would please me to see him well thumped for having failed in my bidding. I fear me, though, there is but poor chance of my seeing such a pleasant sight." So saying, he stretched himself at length upon the ground, that he might not only see the sport the better, but that he might enjoy the merry sight at his ease.

As you may have seen two dogs that think to fight, walking slowly round and round each other, neither cur wishing to begin the combat, so those two stout yeomen moved slowly around, each watching for a chance to take the other unaware, and so get in the first blow. At last Little John struck like a flash, and, "rap," the Tanner met the blow and turned it aside, and then smote back at Little John, who also turned the blow; and so this mighty battle began. Then up and down and back and forth they trod, the blows falling so thick and fast that, at a distance, one would have thought that half a score of men were fighting. Thus they fought for nigh a half an hour, until the ground was all ploughed up with the digging of their heels, and their breathing grew labored like the ox in the furrow. But Little John suffered the most, for he had become unused to such stiff labor, and his joints were not as supple as they had been before he went to dwell with the Sheriff.

All this time Robin Hood lay beneath the bush, rejoicing at such a comely bout of quarterstaff. "By my faith!" quoth he to himself, "never had I thought to see Little John so evenly matched in all my life. Belike, though, he would have overcome yon stout fellow before this had he been in his former trim."

At last Little John saw his chance, and, throwing all the strength he felt going from him into one blow that might have felled an ox, he struck at the Tanner with might and main. And now did the Tanner's cowhide cap stand him in good stead, and but for it he might never have held staff in hand again. As it was,

the blow he caught beside the head was so shrewd that it sent him staggering across the little glade, so that, if Little John had had the strength to follow up his vantage, it would have been ill for stout Arthur. But he regained himself quickly, and at arm's length, struck back a blow at Little John, and this time the stroke reached its mark, and down went Little John at full length, his cudgel flying from his hand as he fell. Then, raising his staff, stout Arthur dealt him another blow upon the ribs.

"Hold!" roared Little John. "Wouldst thou strike a man when he is down?"

"Ay, marry would I," quoth the Tanner, giving him another thwack with his staff.

"Stop!" roared Little John. "Help! hold, I say! I yield me! I yield me, I say, good fellow!"

"Hast thou had enough?" asked the Tanner, grimly, holding his staff aloft.

"Ay, marry, and more than enough."

"And thou dost own that I am the better man of the two?"

"Yea, truly, and a murrain seize thee!" said Little John, the first aloud and the last to his beard.

"Then thou mayst go thy ways; and thank thy patron saint that I am a merciful man," said the Tanner.

"A plague o' such mercy as thine!" said Little John, sitting up and feeling his ribs where the Tanner had cudgelled him. "I make my vow, my ribs feel as though every one of them were broken in twain. I tell thee, good fellow, I did think there was never a man in all Nottinghamshire could do to me what thou hast done this day."

"And so thought I, also," cried Robin Hood, bursting out of the thicket and shouting with laughter till the tears ran down his cheeks. "O man, man!" said he, as well as he could for his mirth, "'a didst go over like a bottle knocked from a wall. I did see the whole merry bout, and ever did I think to see thee yield thyself so, hand and foot, to any man in all merry England. I was seeking thee, to chide thee for leaving my bidding undone; but thou hast been paid all I owed thee, full measure, pressed down and overflowing, by this good fellow. Marry, 'a did reach out his arm full length whilst thou stood gaping at him, and, with a pretty rap, tumbled thee over as never have I seen one tumbled before." So spoke bold Robin, and all the time Little John sat upon the ground,

looking as though he had sour curds in his mouth. "What may be thy name, good fellow?" said Robin, next, turning to the Tanner.

"Men do call me Arthur a Bland," spoke up the Tanner, boldly; "and now what may be thy name?"

"Ha, Arthur a Bland!" quoth Robin, "I have heard thy name before, good fellow. Thou didst break the crown of a friend of mine at the fair at Ely last October. The folk there call him Jock o' Nottingham; we call him Will Scathe-lock. This poor fellow whom thou hast so belabored is counted the best hand at the quarterstaff in all merry England. His name is Little John, and mine Robin Hood."

"How!" cried the Tanner, "art thou indeed the great Robin Hood, and is this the famous Little John? Marry, had I known who thou art, I would never have been so bold as to lift my hand against thee. Let me help thee to thy feet, good Master Little John, and let me brush the dust from off thy coat."

"Nay," quoth Little John, testily, at the same time rising carefully, as though his bones had been made of glass, "I can help myself, good fellow, without thy aid; and, let me tell thee, had it not been for that vile cowskin cap of thine, it would have been ill for thee this day."

At this Robin laughed again, and, turning to the Tanner, he said, "Wilt thou join my band, good Arthur? for I make my vow thou art one of the stoutest men that ever mine eyes beheld."

"Will I join thy band?" cried the Tanner, joyfully; "ay, marry, will I! Hey for a merry life!" cried he, leaping aloft and snapping his fingers, "and hey for the life I love! Away with tanbark and filthy vats and foul cowhides! I will follow thee to the ends of the earth, good master, and not a herd of dun deer in all the forest but shall know the sound of the twang of my bowstring."

"As for thee, Little John," said Robin, turning to him and laughing, "thou wilt start once more for Ancaster, and we will go part way with thee, for I will not have thee turn again to either the right hand or the left till thou hast fairly gotten away from Sherwood. There are other inns that thou knowest yet, hereabouts." Thereupon, leaving the thickets, they took once more to the highway, and departed upon their business.

## The Emperor's New Clothes<sup>1</sup>

MANY years ago there lived an Emperor, who cared so enormously for new clothes that he spent all his money upon them, that he might be very fine. He did not care about his soldiers, nor about the theatre, and only liked to drive out and show his new clothes. He had a coat for every hour of the day; and just as they say of a king, "He is in council," one always said of him, "The Emperor is in the wardrobe."

In the great city in which he lived it was always very merry; every day a number of strangers arrived there. One day two cheats came: they gave themselves out as weavers, and declared that they could weave the finest stuff any one could imagine. Not only were their colors and patterns, they said, uncommonly beautiful, but the clothes made of the stuff possessed the wonderful quality that they became invisible to any one who was unfit for the office he held, or was incorrigibly stupid.

"Those would be capital clothes!" thought the Emperor. "If I wore those, I should be able to find out what men in my empire are not fit for the places they have; I could distinguish the clever from the stupid. Yes, the stuff must be woven for me directly!"

And he gave the two cheats a great deal of cash in hand, that they might begin their work at once. As for them, they put up two looms, and pretended to be working; but they had nothing at all on their looms. They at once demanded the finest silk and the costliest gold; this they put into their own pockets, and worked at the empty looms till late into the night.

"I should like to know how far they have got on with the stuff," thought the Emperor. But he felt quite uncomfortable when he thought that those who were not fit for their offices could not see it. He believed, indeed, that he had nothing to fear for himself, yet he preferred first to send some one else to see how matters stood. All the people in the whole city knew what peculiar power the stuff possessed, and all were anxious to see how bad or how stupid their neighbors were.

"I will send my honest old Minister to the weavers," thought the Emperor. "He can judge

<sup>1</sup>From *Fairy Tales* by Hans Christian Andersen, 1946. By permission of The World Publishing Company.

best how the stuff looks, for he has sense, and no one understands his office better than he."

Now the good old Minister went out into the hall where the two cheats sat working at the empty looms.

"Mercy preserve us!" thought the old Minister, and he opened his eyes wide. "I cannot see anything at all!" But he did not say this.

Both the cheats begged him to be kind enough to come nearer, and asked if he did not approve of the colors and the pattern. Then they pointed to the empty loom, and the poor old Minister went on opening his eyes; but he could see nothing, for there was nothing to see.

"Mercy!" thought he, "can I indeed be so stupid? I never thought that, nor a soul must know it. Am I not fit for my office?—No, it will never do for me to tell that I could not see the stuff."

"Do you say nothing to it?" said one of the weavers.

"Oh, it is charming—quite charming!" answered the old Minister, as he peered through his spectacles. "What a fine pattern, and what colors! Yes, I shall tell the Emperor that I am very much pleased with it."

"Well, we are glad of that," said both the weavers; and then they named the colors, and explained the strange pattern. The old Minister listened attentively, that he might be able to repeat it when the Emperor came. And he did so.

Now the cheats asked for more money, and more silk and gold, which they declared they wanted for weaving. They put all into their own pockets, and not a thread was put upon the loom; but they continued to work at the empty frames as before.

The Emperor soon sent again, dispatching another honest statesman, to see how the weaving was going on, and if the stuff would soon be ready. He fared just like the first: he looked and looked, but, as there was nothing to be seen but the empty looms, he could see nothing.

"Is not that a pretty piece of stuff?" asked the two cheats, and they displayed and explained the handsome pattern which was not there at all.

"I am not stupid!" thought the man; "it must be my good office, for which I am not fit. It is odd enough, but I must not let it be

noticed." And so he praised the stuff which he did not see, and expressed his pleasure at the beautiful colors and the charming pattern. "Yes, it is enchanting," he said to the Emperor.

All the people in the town were talking of the gorgeous stuff. The Emperor wished to see it himself while it was still upon the loom. With a whole crowd of chosen men, among whom were also the two honest statesmen, who had already been there, he went to the two cunning cheats, who were now weaving with might and main without fibre or thread.

"Is that not splendid?" said the two old statesmen, who had already been there once. "Does not your Majesty remark the pattern and the colors?" And then they pointed to the empty loom, for they thought that others could see the stuff.

"What's this?" thought the Emperor. "I can see nothing at all! That is terrible. Am I stupid? Am I not fit to be Emperor? That would be the most dreadful thing that could happen to me.—Oh, it is *very* pretty!" he said aloud. "It has our exalted approbation." And he nodded in a contented way, and gazed at the empty loom, for he would not say that he saw nothing. The whole suite whom he had with him looked and looked, and saw nothing, any more than the rest; but, like the Emperor, they said, "That is pretty!" and counselled him to wear these splendid new clothes for the first time at the great procession that was presently to take place. "It is splendid, tasteful, excellent!" went from mouth to mouth. On all sides there seemed to be general rejoicing, and the Emperor gave the cheats the title of Imperial Court Weavers.

The whole night before the morning on which the procession was to take place the cheats were up, and had lighted more than sixteen candles. The people could see that they were hard at work, completing the Emperor's new clothes. They pretended to take the stuff down from the loom; they made cuts in the air with great scissors; they sewed with needles without thread; and at last they said, "Now the clothes are ready!"

The Emperor came himself with his noblest cavaliers; and the two cheats lifted up one arm as if they were holding something, and said, "See, here are the trousers! Here is the coat! Here is the cloak!" and so on. "It is

as light as a spider's web: one would think one had nothing on; but that is just the beauty of it."

"Yes," said all the cavaliers; but they could not see anything, for nothing was there.

"Does your Imperial Majesty please to condescend to undress?" said the cheats; "then we will put on you the new clothes here in front of the great mirror."

The Emperor took off his clothes, and the cheats pretended to put on him each new garment as it was ready; and the Emperor turned round and round before the mirror.

"Oh, how well they look! How capitably they fit!" said all. "What a pattern! What colors! That is a splendid dress!"

"They are standing outside with the canopy which is to be borne above your Majesty in the procession!" announced the head master of the ceremonies.

"Well, I am ready," replied the Emperor. "Does it not suit me well?" And then he turned again to the mirror, for he wanted it to appear as if he contemplated his adornment with great interest.

The chamberlains, who were to carry the train, stooped down with their hands toward the floor, just as if they were picking up the mantle; then they pretended to be holding something up in the air. They did not dare let it be noticed that they saw nothing.

So the Emperor went in procession under the rich canopy, and everyone in the streets said, "How incomparable are the Emperor's new clothes! What a train he has to his mantle! How it fits him!" No one would let it be perceived that he could see nothing, for that would have shown that he was not fit for his office, or was very stupid. No clothes of the Emperor's had ever had such a success as these.

"But he has nothing on!" a little child cried out at last.

"Just hear what that innocent says!" said the father; and one whispered to another what the child had said.

"But he has nothing on!" said the whole people at length. That touched the Emperor, for it seemed to him that they were right; but he thought within himself, "I must go through with the procession." And the chamberlains held on tighter than ever, and carried the train which did not exist at all.

## A Mad Tea-Party<sup>1</sup>

THERE was a table set out under a tree in front of the house, and the March Hare and the Hatter were having tea at it: a Dormouse was sitting between them, fast asleep, and the other two were using it as a cushion, resting their elbows on it, and talking over its head. "Very uncomfortable for the Dormouse," thought Alice; "only, as it's asleep, I suppose it doesn't mind."

The table was a large one, but the three were all crowded together at one corner of it: "No room! No room!" they cried out when they saw Alice coming. "There's plenty of room!" said Alice indignantly, and she sat down in a large arm-chair at one end of the table.

"Have some wine," the March Hare said in an encouraging tone.

Alice looked all round the table, but there was nothing on it but tea. "I don't see any wine," she remarked.

"There isn't any," said the March Hare.

"Then it wasn't very civil of you to offer it," said Alice angrily.

"It wasn't very civil of you to sit down without being invited," said the March Hare.

"I didn't know it was *your* table," said Alice; "it's laid for a great many more than three."

"Your hair wants cutting," said the Hatter. He had been looking at Alice for some time with great curiosity, and this was his first speech.

"You should learn not to make personal remarks," Alice said with some severity: "It's very rude."

The Hatter opened his eyes very wide on hearing this; but all he said was, "Why is a raven like a writing-desk?"

"Come, we shall have some fun now!" thought Alice. "I'm glad they've begun asking riddles—I believe I can guess that," she added aloud.

"Do you mean that you think you can find out the answer to it?" said the March Hare.

"Exactly so," said Alice.

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least—at

<sup>1</sup>From *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll.



least I mean what I say—that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "Why, you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see!'"

"You might just as well say," added the March Hare, "that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like!'"

"You might just as well say," added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe!'"

"It is the same thing with you," said the Hatter, and here the conversation dropped, and the party sat silent for a minute, while Alice thought over all she could remember about ravens and writing-desks, which wasn't much.

The Hatter was the first to break the silence. "What day of the month is it?" he said, turning to Alice: he had taken his watch out of his pocket, and was looking at it uneasily, shaking it every now and then, and holding it to his ear.

Alice considered a little, and said, "The fourth."

"Two days wrong!" sighed the Hatter. "I told you butter wouldn't suit the works!" he added, looking angrily at the March Hare.

"It was the *best* butter," the March Hare meekly replied.

"Yes, but some crumbs must have got in as well," the Hatter grumbled: "you shouldn't have put it in with the bread-knife."

The March Hare took the watch and looked at it gloomily: then he dipped it into his cup of tea, and looked at it again: but he could think of nothing better to say than his first remark, "It was the *best* butter, you know."

Alice had been looking over his shoulder with some curiosity. "What a funny watch!" she remarked. "It tells the day of the month, and doesn't tell what o'clock it is!"

"Why should it?" muttered the Hatter. "Does *your* watch tell you what year it is?"

"Of course not," Alice replied very readily: "but that's because it stays the same year for such a long time together."

"Which is just the case with *mine*," said the Hatter.

Alice felt dreadfully puzzled. The Hatter's remark seemed to her to have no sort of mean-

ing in it, and yet it was certainly English. "I don't quite understand you," she said, as politely as she could.

"The Dormouse is asleep again," said the Hatter, and he poured a little hot tea on to its nose.

The Dormouse shook its head impatiently, and said, without opening its eyes, "Of course, of course: just what I was going to remark myself."

"Have you guessed the riddle yet?" the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

"No, I give it up," Alice replied: "what's the answer?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," said the Hatter.

"Nor I," said the March Hare.

Alice sighed wearily. "I think you might do something better with the time," she said, "than wasting it in asking riddles that have no answers."

"If you knew Time as well as I do," said the Hatter, "you wouldn't talk about wasting *it*! It's *him*."

"I don't know what you mean," said Alice.

"Of course you don't!" the Hatter said, tossing his head contemptuously. "I dare say you never even spoke to Time!"

"Perhaps not," Alice cautiously replied: "but I know I have to beat time when I learn music."

"Ah! That accounts for it," said the Hatter. "He won't stand beating. Now, if you only kept on good terms with him, he'd do almost anything you liked with the clock."

"For instance, suppose it were nine o'clock in the morning, just time to begin lessons: you'd only have to whisper a hint to Time, and round goes the clock in a twinkling! Half-past one, time for dinner!"

("I only wish it was," the March Hare said to itself in a whisper.)

"That would be grand, certainly," said Alice thoughtfully: "but then—I shouldn't be hungry for it, you know."

"Not at first, perhaps," said the Hatter; "but you could keep it to half-past one as long as you liked."

"Is that the way *you* manage?" Alice asked.

The Hatter shook his head mournfully. "Not *it*!" he replied. "We quarreled last March—just before *he* went mad, you know—" (pointing with his teaspoon at the March Hare,)—"it was at the great concert given by the Queen of

Hearts, and I had to sing

*Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!  
How I wonder what you're at!*

You know the song, perhaps?"

"I've heard something like it," said Alice.

"It goes on, you know," the Hatter continued,  
"in this way:—

*'Up above the world you fly,  
Like a teatray in the sky.  
Twinkle, twinkle—'*

Here the Dormouse shook itself, and began singing in its sleep "*Twinkle, twinkle, twinkle, twinkle—*" and went on so long that they had to pinch it to make it stop.

"Well, I'd hardly finished the first verse," said the Hatter, "when the Queen bawled out 'He's murdering the time! Off with his head!'"

"How dreadfully savage!" exclaimed Alice.

"And ever since that," the Hatter went on in a mournful tone, "he won't do a thing I ask! It's always six o'clock now."

A bright idea came into Alice's head. "Is that the reason so many tea-things are put out here?" she asked.

"Yes, that's it," said the Hatter with a sigh: "it's always tea-time, and we've no time to wash the things between whiles."

"Then you keep moving round, I suppose?" said Alice.

"Exactly so," said the Hatter: "as the things get used up."

"But when you come to the beginning again?" Alice ventured to ask.

"Suppose we change the subject," the March Hare interrupted, yawning. "I'm getting tired of this. I vote the young lady tells us a story."

"I'm afraid I don't know one," said Alice, rather alarmed at the proposal.

"Then the Dormouse shall!" they both cried. "Wake up, Dormouse!" And they pinched it on both sides at once.

The Dormouse slowly opened his eyes. "I wasn't asleep," he said in a hoarse, feeble voice: "I heard every word you fellows were saying."

"Tell us a story!" said the March Hare.

"Yes, please do!" pleaded Alice.

"And be quick about it," added the Hatter, "or you'll be asleep again before it's done."

"Once upon a time there were three little sisters," the Dormouse began in a great hurry; "and their names were Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie; and they lived at the bottom of a well—"

"What did they live on?" said Alice, who

always took a great interest in questions of eating and drinking.

"They lived on treacle," said the Dormouse, after thinking a minute or two.

"They couldn't have done that, you know," Alice gently remarked. "They'd have been ill."

"So they were," said the Dormouse; "*very ill.*"

Alice tried a little to fancy to herself what such an extraordinary way of living would be like, but it puzzled her too much, so she went on: "But why did they live at the bottom of a well?"

"Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.

"I've had nothing yet," Alice replied in an offended tone, "so I can't take more."

"You mean you can't take *less*," said the Hatter: "it's very easy to take *more* than nothing."

"Nobody asked *your* opinion," said Alice.

"Who's making personal remarks now?" the Hatter asked triumphantly.

Alice did not quite know what to say to this: so she helped herself to some tea and bread-and-butter, and then turned to the Dormouse, and repeated her question. "Why did they live at the bottom of a well?"

The Dormouse again took a minute or two to think about it, and then said, "It was a treacle-well."

"There's no such thing!" Alice was beginning very angrily, but the Hatter and the March Hare went "Sh! Sh!" and the Dormouse sulkily remarked, "If you can't be civil, you'd better finish the story for yourself."

"No, please go on!" Alice said very humbly. "I won't interrupt you again. I dare say there may be one."

"One, indeed!" said the Dormouse indignantly. However, he consented to go on. "And so these three little sisters—they were learning to draw, you know—"

"What did they draw?" said Alice, quite forgetting her promise.

"Treacle," said the Dormouse, without considering at all this time.

"I want a clean cup," interrupted the Hatter: "let's all move one place on."

He moved on as he spoke, and the Dormouse followed him: the March Hare moved into the Dormouse's place, and Alice rather unwillingly took the place of the March Hare. The Hatter was the only one who got any advantage from the change: and Alice was a

good deal worse off than before, as the March Hare had just upset the milk-jug into his plate.

Alice did not wish to offend the Dormouse again, so she began very cautiously: "But I don't understand. Where did they draw the treacle from?"

"You can draw water out of a water-well," said the Hatter; "so I should think you could draw treacle out of a treacle-well—eh, stupid?"

"But they were *in* the well," Alice said to the Dormouse, not choosing to notice this last remark.

"Of course they were," said the Dormouse,—  
"well in."

This answer so confused poor Alice, that she let the Dormouse go on for some time without interrupting it.

"They were learning to draw," the Dormouse went on, yawning and rubbing his eyes, for it was getting very sleepy; "and they drew all manner of things—everything that begins with an M—"

"Why with an M?" said Alice.

"Why not?" said the March Hare.

Alice was silent.

The Dormouse had closed its eyes by this time, and was going off into a doze, but, on being pinched by the Hatter, it woke up again with a little shriek, and went on: "—that begins with an M, such as mousetraps, and the moon, and memory, and muchness—you know you say things are 'much of a muchness'—did you ever see such a thing as a drawing of a muchness?"

"Really, now you ask me," said Alice, very much confused, "I don't think—"

"Then you shouldn't talk," said the Hatter.

*This piece of rudeness was more than Alice could bear:* she got up in great disgust, and walked off: the Dormouse fell asleep instantly, and neither of the others took the least notice of her going, though she looked back once or twice, half hoping that they would call after her: the last time she saw them, they were trying to put the Dormouse into the teapot.

"At any rate I'll never go *there* again!" said Alice as she picked her way through the wood "It's the stupidest tea-party I ever was at in all my life!"

Just as she said this, she noticed that one of the trees had a door leading right into it. "That's very curious!" she thought. "But everything's curious today. I think I may as well go in at once." And in she went.

Once more she found herself in the long hall, and close to the little glass table. "Now, I'll manage better this time," she said to herself, and began by taking the little golden key, and unlocking the door that led into the garden. Then she set to work nibbling at the mushroom (she had kept a piece of it in her pocket) till she was about a foot high: then she walked down the little passage: and *then*—she found herself at last in the beautiful garden, among the bright flowerbeds and the cool fountains.

## Pinocchio<sup>1</sup>

EVERY one, at one time or another, has found some surprise awaiting him. Of the kind which Pinocchio had on that eventful morning of his life, there are but few.

What was it? I will tell you, my dear little readers. On awakening, Pinocchio put his hand up to his head and there he found—

Guess!

He found that, during the night, his ears had grown at least ten full inches!

You must know that the *Marionette*, even from his birth, had very small ears, so small indeed that to the naked eye they could hardly be seen. Fancy how he felt when he noticed that overnight those two dainty organs had become as long as shoe brushes!

He went in search of a mirror, but not finding any, he just filled a basin with water and looked at himself. There he saw what he never could have wished to see. His manly figure was adorned and enriched by a beautiful pair of donkey's ears.

I leave you to think of the terrible grief, the shame, the despair of the poor *Marionette*.

He began to cry, to scream, to knock his head against the wall, but the more he shrieked, the longer and the more hairy grew his ears.

At those piercing shrieks, a Dormouse came into the room, a fat little Dormouse, who lived upstairs. Seeing Pinocchio so grief-stricken, she asked him anxiously:

"What is the matter, dear little neighbor?"

"I am sick, my little Dormouse, very, very sick—and from an illness which frightens me! Do you understand how to feel the pulse?"

<sup>1</sup>From *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Lorenzini (Collodi), translated by Carol Della Chiesa, 1927. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

"A little."

"Feel mine then and tell me if I have a fever."

The Dormouse took Pinocchio's wrist between her paws and, after a few minutes, looked up at him sorrowfully and said:

"My friend, I am sorry, but I must give you some very sad news."

"What is it?"

"You have a very bad fever."

"But what fever is it?"

"The donkey fever."

"I don't know anything about that fever," answered the Marionette, beginning to understand even too well what was happening to him.

"Then I will tell you all about it," said the Dormouse. "Know then that, within two or three hours, you will no longer be a Marionette, nor a boy."

"What shall I be?"

"Within two or three hours you will become a real donkey, just like the ones that pull the fruit carts to market."

"Oh, what have I done? What have I done?" cried Pinocchio, grasping his two long ears in his hands and pulling and tugging at them angrily, just as if they belonged to another.

"My dear boy," answered the Dormouse to cheer him up a bit, "why worry now? What is done cannot be undone, you know. Fate has decreed that all lazy boys who come to hate books and schools and teachers and spend all their days with toys and games must sooner or later turn into donkeys."

"But is it really so?" asked the Marionette, sobbing bitterly.

"I am sorry to say it is. And tears now are useless. You should have thought of all this before."

"But the fault is not mine. Believe me, little Dormouse, the fault is all Lamp-Wick's."

"And who is this Lamp-Wick?"

"A classmate of mine. I wanted to return home I wanted to be obedient. I wanted to study and to succeed in school, but Lamp-Wick said to me, 'Why do you want to waste your time studying? Why do you want to go to school? Come with me to the Land of Toys. There we'll never study again. There we can enjoy ourselves and be happy from morn till night.'"

"And why did you follow the advice of that false friend?"

"Why? Because, my dear little Dormouse,

I am a heedless Marionette—heedless and heartless. Oh! If I had only had a bit of heart, I should never have abandoned that good Fairy, who loved me so well and who has been so kind to me! And by this time, I should no longer be a Marionette, I should have become a real boy, like all these friends of mine! Oh, if I meet Lamp-Wick I am going to tell him what I think of him—and more too!"

After this long speech, Pinocchio walked to the door of the room. But when he reached it, remembering his donkey ears, he felt ashamed to show them to the public and turned back. He took a large cotton bag from a shelf, put it on his head, and pulled it far down to his very nose.

Thus adorned, he went out. He looked for Lamp-Wick everywhere, along the streets, in the squares, inside the theaters, everywhere; but he was not to be found. He asked every one whom he met about him, but no one had seen him.

In desperation, he returned home and knocked at the door.

"Who is it?" asked Lamp-Wick from within.

"It is I!" answered the Marionette.

"Wait a minute."

After a full half hour the door opened. Another surprise awaited Pinocchio! There in the room stood his friend, with a large cotton bag on his head, pulled far down to his very nose.

At the sight of that bag, Pinocchio felt slightly happier and thought to himself:

"My friend must be suffering from the same sickness that I am! I wonder if he, too, has donkey fever?"

But pretending he had seen nothing, he asked with a smile:

"How are you, my dear Lamp-Wick?"

"Very well. Like a mouse in a Parmesan cheese."

"Is that really true?"

"Why should I lie to you?"

"I beg your pardon, my friend, but why then are you wearing that cotton bag over your ears?"

"The doctor has ordered it because one of my knees hurts. And you, dear Marionette, why are you wearing that cotton bag down to your nose?"

"The doctor has ordered it, because I have bruised my foot."

"Oh, my poor Pinocchio!"

"Oh, my poor Lamp-Wick!"

An embarrassingly long silence followed these words, during which time the two friends looked at each other in a mocking way.

Finally the Marionette, in a voice sweet as honey and soft as a flute, said to his companion:

"Tell me, Lamp-Wick, dear friend, have you ever suffered from an earache?"

"Never! And you?"

"Never! Still, since this morning my ear has been torturing me."

"So has mine."

"Yours, too? And which ear is it?"

"Both of them. And yours?"

"Both of them, too. I wonder if it could be the same sickness."

"I'm afraid it is."

"Will you do me a favor, Lamp-Wick?"

"Gladly! With my whole heart."

"Will you let me see your ears?"

"Why not? But before I show you mine, I want to see yours, dear Pinocchio."

"No. You must show yours first."

"No, my dear! Yours first, then mine."

"Well, then," said the Marionette, "let us make a contract."

"Let's hear the contract!"

"Let us take off our caps together. All right?"

"All right."

"Ready then!"

Pinocchio began to count, "One! Two! Three!"

At the word "Three!" the two boys pulled off their caps and threw them high in air.

And then a scene took place which is hard to believe, but it is all too true. The Marionette and his friend, Lamp-Wick, when they saw each other both stricken by the same misfortune, instead of feeling sorrowful and ashamed, began to poke fun at each other, and after much nonsense, they ended by bursting out into hearty laughter.

They laughed and laughed, and laughed again—laughed till they ached—laughed till they cried.

But all of a sudden Lamp-Wick stopped laughing. He tottered and almost fell. Pale as a ghost, he turned to Pinocchio and said:

"Help, help, Pinocchio!"

"What is the matter?"

"Oh, help me! I can no longer stand up."

"I can't either," cried Pinocchio; and his laughter turned to tears as he stumbled about helplessly.

They had hardly finished speaking, when both of them fell on all fours and began running and jumping around the room. As they ran, their arms turned into legs, their faces lengthened into snouts, and their backs became covered with long gray hairs.

This was humiliation enough, but the most horrible moment was the one in which the two poor creatures felt their tails appear. Overcome with shame and grief, they tried to cry and bemoan their fate.

But what is done can't be undone! Instead of moans and cries, they burst forth into loud donkey brays, which sounded very much like, "Haw! Haw! Haw!"

At that moment, a loud knocking was heard at the door and a voice called to them:

"Open! I am the Little Man, the driver of the wagon which brought you here. Open, I say, or beware!"

## The Open Road<sup>1</sup>

"RATTY," said the Mole suddenly, one bright summer morning, "if you please, I want to ask you a favour."

The Rat was sitting on the river bank, singing a little song. He had just composed it himself, so he was very taken up with it, and would not pay proper attention to Mole or anything else. Since early morning he had been swimming in the river in company with his friends the ducks. And when the ducks stood on their heads suddenly, as ducks will, he would dive down and tickle their necks just under where their chins would be if ducks had chins, till they were forced to come to the surface again in a hurry, spluttering and angry and shaking their feathers at him, for it is impossible to say quite *all* you feel when your head is under water. At last they implored him to go away and attend to his own affairs and leave them to mind theirs. So the Rat went away, and sat on the river bank in the sun, and made up a song about them, which he called

### DUCKS' DITTY

All along the backwater,  
Through the rushes tall,  
Ducks are a-dabbling,  
Up tails all!

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *The Wind in the Willows* by Kenneth Grahame, copyright 1908, 1935 by Charles Scribner's Sons; used by permission of the publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons.

Ducks' tails, drakes' tails,  
Yellow feet a-quiver,  
Yellow bills all out of sight  
Busy in the river!

Slushy green undergrowth  
Where the roach swim—  
Here we keep our larder,  
Cool and full and dim.

Every one for what he likes!  
We like to be  
Heads down, tails up,  
Dabbling free!

High in the blue above  
Swifts whirl and call—  
We are down a-dabbling  
Up tails all!

"I don't know that I think so *very* much of that little song, Rat," observed the Mole cautiously. He was no poet himself and didn't care who knew it; and he had a candid nature.

"Nor don't the ducks neither," replied the Rat cheerfully. "They say, *Why* can't fellows be allowed to do what they like *when* they like and as they like, instead of other fellows sitting on banks and watching them all the time and making remarks, and poetry and things about them? What *nonsense* it all is!" That's what the ducks say."

"So it is, so it is," said the Mole, with great heartiness.

"No, it isn't!" cried the Rat indignantly.

"Well then, it isn't, it isn't," replied the Mole soothingly. "But what I wanted to ask you was, won't you take me to call on Mr. Toad? I've heard so much about him, and I do so want to make his acquaintance."

"Why, certainly," said the good-natured Rat, jumping to his feet and dismissing poetry from his mind for the day. "Get the boat out, and we'll paddle up there at once. It's never the wrong time to call on Toad. Early or late he's always the same fellow. Always good-tempered, always glad to see you, always sorry when you go!"

"He must be a very nice animal," observed the Mole, as he got into the boat and took the sculls, while the Rat settled himself comfortably in the stern.

"He is indeed the best of animals," replied Rat. "So simple, so good-natured, and so affectionate. Perhaps he's not very clever—we can't

all be geniuses; and it may be that he is both boastful and conceited. But he has got some great qualities, has Toady." Rounding a bend in the river, they came in sight of a handsome, dignified old house of mellowed red brick, with well-kept lawns reaching down to the water's edge.

"There's Toad Hall," said the Rat; "and that creek on the left, where the notice-board says, 'Private. No landing allowed,' leads to his boat-house, where we'll leave the boat. The stables are over there to the right. That's the banqueting-hall you're looking at now—very old, that is. Toad is rather rich, you know, and this is really one of the nicest houses in these parts, though we never admit as much to Toad."

They glided up the creek, and the Mole shipped his sculls as they passed into the shadow of a large boat-house. Here they saw many handsome boats, slung from the cross-beams or hauled up on a slip, but none in the water; and the place had an unused and deserted air.

The Rat looked around him. "I understand," said he. "Boating is played out. He's tired of it, and done with it. I wonder what new fad he has taken up now? Come along and let's look him up. We shall hear all about it quite soon enough."

They disembarked, and strolled across the gay flower-decked lawns in search of Toad, whom they presently happened upon resting in a wicker garden-chair, with a preoccupied expression of face, and a large map spread out on his knees.

"Hooray!" he cried, jumping up on seeing them, "this is splendid!" He shook the paws of both of them warmly, never waiting for an introduction to the Mole. "How *kind* of you!" he went on, dancing round them. "I was just going to send a boat down the river for you, Ratty, with strict orders that you were to be fetched up here at once, whatever you were doing. I want you badly—both of you. Now what will you take? Come inside and have something! You don't know how lucky it is, your turning up just now!"

"Let's sit quiet a bit, Toady!" said the Rat, throwing himself into an easy chair, while the Mole took another by the side of him and made some civil remark about Toad's "delightful residence."

"Finest house on the whole river," cried Toad boisterously. "Or anywhere else, for that matter," he could not help adding.

Here the Rat nudged the Mole. Unfortunately the Toad saw him do it, and turned very red. There was a moment's painful silence. Then Toad burst out laughing. "All right, Ratty," he said. "It's only my way, you know. And it's not such a very bad house, is it? You know you rather like it yourself. Now, look here. Let's be sensible. You are the very animals I wanted. You've got to help me. It's most important!"

"It's about your rowing, I suppose," said the Rat, with an innocent air. "You're getting on fairly well, though you splash a good bit still. With a great deal of patience, and any quantity of coaching, you may—"

"O, pooh! boating!" interrupted the Toad, in great disgust. "Silly boyish amusement. I've given that up *long ago*. Sheer waste of time, that's what it is. It makes me downright sorry to see you fellows, who ought to know better, spending all your energies in that aimless manner. No, I've discovered the real thing, the only genuine occupation for a lifetime. I propose to devote the remainder of mine to it, and can only regret the wasted years that lie behind me, squandered in trivialities. Come with me, dear Ratty, and your amiable friend also, if he will be so very good, just as far as the stable-yard, and you shall see what you shall see!"

He led the way to the stable-yard accordingly, the Rat following with a most mistrustful expression; and there, drawn out of the coach-house into the open, they saw a gipsy caravan, *shining with newness, painted a canary-yellow picked out with green, and red wheels.*

"There you are!" cried the Toad, straddling and expanding himself. "There's real life for you, embodied in that little cart. The open road, the dusty highway, the heath, the common, the hedgerows, the rolling downs! Camps, villages, towns, cities! Here to-day, up and off to somewhere else to-morrow! Travel, change, interest, excitement! The whole world before you, and a horizon that's always changing! And mind, this is the very finest cart of its sort that was ever built, without any exception. Come inside and look at the arrangements. Planned 'em all myself, I did!"

The Mole was tremendously interested and excited, and followed him eagerly up the steps and into the interior of the caravan. The Rat only snorted and thrust his hands deep into his pockets, remaining where he was.

It was indeed very compact and comfortable.

Little sleeping-bunks—a little table that folded up against the wall—a cooking-stove, lockers, bookshelves, a bird-cage with a bird in it; and pots, pans, jugs and kettles of every size and variety.

"All complete!" said the Toad triumphantly, pulling open a locker. "You see—biscuits, potted lobster, sardines—everything you can possibly want. Soda-water here—baccy there—letter-paper, bacon, jam, cards and dominoes—you'll find," he continued, as they descended the steps again, "you'll find that nothing whatever has been forgotten, when we make our start this afternoon."

"I beg your pardon," said the Rat slowly, as he chewed a straw, "but did I overhear you say something about '*we*' and '*start*' and '*this afternoon*'?"

"Now, you dear good old Ratty," said Toad imploringly, "don't begin talking in that stiff and sniffy sort of way, because you know you've got to come. I can't possibly manage without you, so please consider it settled, and don't argue—it's the one thing I can't stand. You surely don't mean to stick to your dull fusty old river all your life, and just live in a hole in a bank, and *boat*? I want to show you the world! I'm going to make an *animal* of you, my boy!"

"I don't care," said the Rat doggedly. "I'm not coming, and that's flat. And I *am* going to stick to my old river, and live in a hole, and boat, as I've always done. And what's more, Mole's going to stick to me and do as I do, aren't you, Mole?"

"Of course I am," said the Mole loyally. "I'll always stick to you, Rat, and what you say is to be—has got to be. All the same, it sounds as if it might have been—well, rather fun, you know!" he added wistfully. Poor Mole! The Life Adventurous was so new a thing to him, and so thrilling; and this fresh aspect of it was so tempting; and he had fallen in love at first sight with the canary-coloured cart and all its little fittings.

The Rat saw what was passing in his mind, and wavered. He hated disappointing people, and he was fond of the Mole, and would do almost anything to oblige him. Toad was watching both of them closely.

"Come along in and have some lunch," he said diplomatically, "and we'll talk it over. We needn't decide anything in a hurry. Of course, I don't really care. I only want to give pleasure

to you fellows. 'Live for others!' That's my motto in life."

During luncheon—which was excellent, of course, as everything at Toad Hall always was—the Toad simply let himself go. Disregarding the Rat, he proceeded to play upon the inexperienced Mole as on a harp. Naturally a voluble animal, and always mastered by his imagination, he painted the prospects of the trip and the joys of the open life and the roadside in such glowing colours that the Mole could hardly sit in his chair for excitement. Somehow it soon seemed taken for granted by all three that the trip was a settled thing; and the Rat, though still unconvinced in his mind, allowed his good-nature to override his personal objections. He could not bear to disappoint his two friends, who were already deep in schemes and anticipations, planning out each day's separate occupation for several weeks ahead.

When they were quite ready, the now triumphant Toad led his companions to the paddock and set them to capture the old grey horse, who, without having been consulted, and to his own extreme annoyance, had been told off by Toad for the dustiest job in this dusty expedition. He frankly preferred the paddock, and took a deal of catching. Meantime Toad packed the lockers still tighter with necessities, and hung nose-bags, nets of onions, bundles of hay, and baskets from the bottom of the cart. At last the horse was caught and harnessed, and they set off, all talking at once, each animal either trudging by the side of the cart or sitting on the shaft, as the humour took him. It was a golden afternoon. The smell of the dust they kicked up was rich and satisfying; out of thick orchards on either side the road, birds called and whistled to them cheerily; good-natured wayfarers, passing them, gave them "Good day," or stopped to say nice things about their beautiful cart; and rabbits, sitting at their front doors in the hedgerows, held up their fore paws, and said, "O my! O my! O my!"

Late in the evening, tired and happy and miles from home, they drew up on a remote common far from habitations, turned the horse loose to graze, and ate their simple supper sitting on the grass by the side of the cart. Toad talked big about all he was going to do in the days to come, while stars grew fuller and larger all around them, and a yellow moon, appearing

suddenly and silently from nowhere in particular, came to keep them company and listen to their talk. At last they turned into their little bunks in the cart; and Toad, kicking out his legs, sleepily said, "Well, good night, you fellows! This is the real life for a gentleman! Talk about your old river!"

"I *don't* talk about my river," replied the patient Rat. "You *know* I don't, Toad. But I *think* about it," he added pathetically, in a lower tone: "I think about it—all the time!"

The Mole reached out from under his blanket, felt for the Rat's paw in the darkness, and gave it a squeeze. "I'll do whatever you like, Ratty," he whispered. "Shall we run away to-morrow morning, quite early—*very* early—and go back to our dear old hole on the river?"

"No, no, we'll see it out," whispered back the Rat. "Thanks awfully, but I ought to stick by Toad till this trip is ended. It wouldn't be safe for him to be left to himself. It won't take very long. His fads never do. Good night!"

The end was indeed nearer than even the Rat suspected.

After so much open air and excitement the Toad slept very soundly, and no amount of shaking could rouse him out of bed next morning. So the Mole and Rat turned to, quietly and manfully, and while the Rat saw to the horse, and lit a fire, and cleaned last night's cups and platters and got things ready for breakfast, the Mole trudged off to the nearest village, a long way off, for milk and eggs and various necessities the Toad had, of course, forgotten to provide. The hard work had all been done, and the two animals were resting, thoroughly exhausted, by the time Toad appeared on the scene, fresh and gay, remarking what a pleasant easy life it was they were all leading now, after the cares and worries and fatigues of housekeeping at home.

They had a pleasant ramble that day over grassy downs and along narrow by-lanes, and camped, as before, on a common, only this time the two guests took care that Toad should do his fair share of work. In consequence, when the time came for starting next morning, Toad was by no means so rapturous about the simplicity of the primitive life, and indeed attempted to resume his place in his bunk, whence he was hauled by force. Their way lay, as before, across country by narrow lanes, and it was not till the



afternoon that they came out on the high road, their first high road; and there disaster, fleet and unforeseen, sprang out on them—disaster momentous indeed to their expedition, but simply overwhelming in its effect on the after-career of Toad.

They were strolling along the high road easily, the Mole by the horse's head, talking to him, since the horse had complained that he was being frightfully left out of it, and nobody considered him in the least; the Toad and the Water Rat walking behind the cart talking together—at least Toad was talking, and Rat was saying at intervals, "Yes, precisely; and what did *you* say to *him*?"—and thinking all the time of something very different, when far behind them they heard a faint warning hum, like the drone of a distant bee. Glancing back, they saw a small cloud of dust, with a dark centre of energy, advancing on them at incredible speed, while from out the dust a faint "Poop-poop!" wailed like an uneasy animal in pain. Hardly regarding it, they turned to resume their conversation, when in an instant (as it seemed) the peaceful scene was changed, and with a blast of wind and a whirl of sound that made them jump for the nearest ditch, it was on them! The "Poop-poop" rang with a brazen shout in their ears, they had a moment's glimpse of an interior of glittering plate-glass and rich morocco, and the magnificent motor-car, immense, breath-snatching, passionate, with its pilot tense and hugging his wheel, possessed all earth and air for the fraction of a second, flung an enveloping cloud of dust that blinded and enwrapped them utterly, and then dwindled to a speck in the far distance, changed back into a droning bee once more.

The old grey horse, dreaming, as he plodded along, of his quiet paddock, in a new raw situation such as this simply abandoned himself to his natural emotions. Rearing, plunging, backing steadily, in spite of all the Mole's efforts at his head, and all the Mole's lively language directed at his better feelings, he drove the cart backwards towards the deep ditch at the side of the road. It wavered an instant—then there was a heart-rending crash—and the canary-coloured cart, their pride and their joy, lay on its side in the ditch, an irredeemable wreck.

The Rat danced up and down in the road, simply transported with passion. "You villains!"

he shouted, shaking both fists. "You scoundrels, you highwaymen, you—you—road-hogs! —I'll have the law of you! I'll report you! I'll take you through all the Courts!" His home-sickness had quite slipped away from him, and for the moment he was the skipper of the canary-coloured vessel driven on a shoal by the reckless jockeying of rival mariners, and he was trying to recollect all the fine and biting things he used to say to masters of steam-launches when their wash, as they drove too near the bank, used to flood his parlour carpet at home.

Toad sat straight down in the middle of the dusty road, his legs stretched out before him, and stared fixedly in the direction of the disappearing motor-car. He breathed short, his face wore a placid, satisfied expression, and at intervals he faintly murmured "Poop-poop!"

The Mole was busy trying to quiet the horse, which he succeeded in doing after a time. Then he went to look at the cart, on its side in the ditch. It was indeed a sorry sight. Panels and windows smashed, axles hopelessly bent, one wheel off, sardine-tins scattered over the wide world, and the bird in the bird-cage sobbing pitifully and calling to be let out.

The Rat came to help him, but their united efforts were not sufficient to right the cart. "Hi! Toad!" they cried. "Come and bear a hand, can't you!"

The Toad never answered a word, or budged from his seat in the road; so they went to see what was the matter with him. They found him in a sort of trance, a happy smile on his face, his eyes still fixed on the dusty wake of their destroyer. At intervals he was still heard to murmur "Poop-poop!"

The Rat shook him by the shoulder. "Are you coming to help us, Toad?" he demanded sternly.

"Glorious, stirring sight!" murmured Toad, never offering to move. "The poetry of motion! The real way to travel! The only way to travel! Here to-day—in next week to-morrow! Villages skipped, towns and cities jumped—always somebody else's horizon! O bliss! O poop-poop! O my! O my!"

"O stop being an ass, Toad!" cried the Mole despairingly.

"And to think I never *knew*!" went on the Toad in a dreamy monotone. "All those wasted years that lie behind me, I never knew, never even *dreamt*! But now—but now that I know,

now that I fully realize! O what a flowery track lies spread before me, henceforth! What dust-clouds shall spring up behind me as I speed on my reckless way! What carts I shall fling carelessly into the ditch in the wake of my magnificent onset! Horrid little carts—common carts—canary-coloured carts!"

"What are we to do with him?" asked the Mole of the Water Rat.

"Nothing at all," replied the Rat firmly. "Because there is really nothing to be done. You see, I know him from of old. He is now possessed. He has got a new craze, and it always takes him that way, in its first stage. He'll continue like that for days now, like an animal walking in a happy dream, quite useless for all practical purposes. Never mind him. Let's go and see what there is to be done about the cart."

A careful inspection showed them that, even if they succeeded in righting it by themselves, the cart would travel no longer. The axles were in a hopeless state, and the missing wheel was shattered into pieces.

The Rat knotted the horse's reins over his back and took him by the head, carrying the bird-cage and its hysterical occupant in the other hand. "Come on!" he said grimly to the Mole. "It's five or six miles to the nearest town, and we shall just have to walk it. The sooner we make a start the better."

"But what about Toad?" asked the Mole anxiously, as they set off together. "We can't leave him here, sitting in the middle of the road by himself, in the distracted state he's in! It's not safe. Supposing another Thing were to come along?"

"O, bother Toad," said the Rat savagely; "I've done with him!"

They had not proceeded very far on their way, however, when there was a pattering of feet behind them, and Toad caught them up and thrust a paw inside the elbow of each of them; still breathing short and staring into vacancy.

"Now, look here, Toad!" said the Rat sharply; "as soon as we get to the town, you'll have to go straight to the police-station, and see if they know anything about that motor-car and who it belongs to, and lodge a complaint against it. And then you'll have to go to a blacksmith's or wheelwright's and arrange for the cart to be fetched and mended and put to rights. It'll take time, but it's not quite a hopeless smash. Meanwhile, the Mole and I will go to an Inn and find

comfortable rooms where we can stay till the cart's ready, and till your nerves have recovered from their shock."

"Police-station! Complaint!" murmured Toad dreamily. "Me *complain* of that beautiful, that heavenly vision that has been vouchsafed me! *Mend the cart!* I've done with carts forever. I never want to see the cart, or to hear of it, again. O, Rat! You can't think how obliged I am to you for consenting to come on this trip! I wouldn't have gone without you, and then I might never have seen that—that swan, that sunbeam, that thunderbolt! I might never have heard that entrancing sound, or smelt that bewitching smell! I owe it all to you, my best of friends!"

The Rat turned from him in despair. "You see what it is?" he said to the Mole, addressing him across Toad's head: "He's quite hopeless. I give it up—when we get to the town we'll go to the railway-station, and with luck we may pick up a train there that'll get us back to River Bank to-night. And if ever you catch me going a-pleasuring with this provoking animal again!" —He snorted, and during the rest of that weary trudge addressed his remarks exclusively to Mole.

On reaching the town they went straight to the station and deposited Toad in the second-class waiting-room, giving a porter twopence to keep a strict eye on him. They then left the horse at an inn stable, and gave what directions they could about the cart and its contents. Eventually, a slow train having landed them at a station not very far from Toad Hall, they escorted the spell-bound, sleep-walking Toad to his door, put him inside it, and instructed his housekeeper to feed him, undress him, and put him to bed. Then they got out their boat from the boat-house, sculled down the river home, and at a very late hour sat down to supper in their own cosy riverside parlour, to the Rat's great joy and contentment.

The following evening the Mole, who had risen late and taken things very easy all day, was sitting on the bank fishing, when the Rat, who had been looking up his friends and gossiping, came strolling along to find him. "Heard the news?" he said. "There's nothing else being talked about, all along the river bank. Toad went up to Town by an early train this morning. And he has ordered a large and very expensive motor-car."

It could have happened

part four



Here and now  
Other times and places  
Animal stories

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS FROM

The Poppy Seed Cakes  
The Middle Moffat  
All American  
Little Pear  
On the Banks of Plum Creek  
Calico Bush  
Flat Tail  
*Justin Morgan Had a Horse*



Illustration from Lois Lenski's  
*Cotton in My Sack*, Lippincott, 1949 (book 6½ x 8½)

Here is Joanda, with sunbonnet  
and sack, pictured in Lois Lenski's  
simple, direct style.

Turning from fairy tales to realism may suggest a descent from romance and adventure to the prosaic and dull, but this is not the case. Realistic stories may be every bit as exciting or humorous or romantic or imaginative as fanciful tales. Realistic stories, however, are always plausible or possible. In a realistic story everything that happens *could* happen. Sometimes the adventures of the hero may seem rather improbable but still merit the classification of realistic because they are possible. Sometimes the hero's exploits may be possible but are so extravagant that they are classified as fanciful. On the whole, a realistic story may be defined as a tale that is convincingly true to life; that is, the places, people, action, and motives seem both possible and plausible.

Modern realistic fiction for children was off to a spirited start with such books as *Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates*, *Heidi*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, and *Little Women*. Indeed, later authors of juvenile realism have produced nothing that is better and a great deal that is distinctly poorer. Strangely enough, this group of notable books had been preceded by such heavy-handed moralizing of

the didactic school as "Spiritual Milk for Boston Babes" and "The Purple Jar." Even more strange, *Hans Brinker*, *Heidi*, and *Tom Sawyer* were followed by the sentimental sweetness of *Little Lord Fauntleroy* and *Sara Crewe*. While there are signs that moralistic and sentimental didacticism is not wholly dead, present-day realistic fiction is predominantly honest. Authors now assume, as did Samuel Clemens, that children are sensible, normal human beings, interested in how other children and grown-ups get along in this workaday world. On the whole, modern realistic fiction for children includes, along

with a great number of mediocre stories, some of the finest children's books ever written.

Realistic stories for children are divided into many categories. There are innumerable stories about peoples of other lands and a growing body of historical novels for children (Chapter 16), animal sagas (Chapter 17), and a steadily improving selection of fiction about contemporary life in our own country—the major concern of this chapter. These stories are particularly valuable to children because they throw over everyday life something of the excitement and charm of fiction.

## Realism for the youngest children

### Here and now, cadence and awareness

Our youngest children, anywhere from two years old to seven, seem to have special need for stories that are as factual and personal as their fingers and toes and the yards and neighborhoods they are beginning to explore. At the beginning of the nineteen twenties, Lucy Sprague Mitchell in her *Here and Now Story Book* called attention to the fact that there were few if any stories for children under five concerned with their modern world. The four- and five-year-olds were given "The Three Little Pigs," "The Gingerbread Boy," and "The Three Billy-Goats Gruff"—over and over again. Of course they liked these stories and still do, regardless of motor buses and airplanes. But they should also have been supplied with stories about children like themselves and about the everyday things of their everyday world.

Mrs. Mitchell set out to supply these tales. She did her best with earnestness and sincerity, but she turned away from plot, centered on the child's own activities, and wrote from the child's own talk—using many sensory-motor words and repetitional phrases. She launched the purr, purr, pat, pat school of writing, which offers the young child pitter-patter in place of plot. Nevertheless, her idea

of a modern realism for the youngest was sound, and she soon had a devoted group of followers. Mrs. Mitchell's work fulfilled a need which few adults had noticed before.

Dr. Dorothy Baruch, at the beginning of her distinguished career as a writer, carried her notebook and pencil to the nursery-school playground and recorded the children's chants and their picturesque comments on what was happening to them. These she put together with, we assume, some editorial touches, and in book form they were read back to the children in lieu of other literature. Most of these little books are now out of print. They were interesting to grown-ups as examples of the child's way of thinking.

### Margaret Wise Brown The City Noisy Book

The most notable of the early followers of Lucy Sprague Mitchell's pattern was, of course, Margaret Wise Brown, who wrote also under the name of Golden MacDonald. It was said that at the peak of her remarkable productivity she turned out some fifty-four books in two years. One of them, *The Little Island*, was so beautifully illustrated by Leonard Weisgard that it won the Caldecott Medal in 1947, and many of the others probably sold on the irresistible appeal of the artists' pictures. The style of her

books was cadenced, the goal was to stimulate the sensory perceptions and awareness of young children.

*The Noisy Book* (1939) was a pioneer in this awareness school of writing. It was followed by several more *Noisy* books. Then there was a series contrasting bigness and littleness. The hero of *The Little Fisherman* caught little fish and the big fisherman caught big fish, and so it went with *The Little Cowboy* and *The Little Farmer*. Of all these innumerable picture books, some in bright colors, some in pastels, one bound in real fur, and all of them cadenced, two will probably outlive or at least outdistance in popularity all of the others. These are *Little Lost Lamb* and *Runaway Bunny*. The former tells a real story about a shepherd boy and his dog who retraced their steps up a dangerous mountain after dark to find a lost lamb. This provides substance for Leonard Weisgard's beautiful pictures. *The Runaway Bunny* is not realistic at all, but a delightful talking-beast tale (p. 335), with the nearest approach to humor that Margaret Wise Brown ever made. Posthumous books have been appearing in considerable numbers since her death. Her contribution lies chiefly in her sensitive perception of the child's sensory responses to this big booming confusion of a world. Her cadenced style comes close to poetry now and then, but her attempts at verse never quite reach poetry.

The books by Margaret Wise Brown launched a torrent of awareness compositions for the young. There were books about night sounds, day smells, wetness, coldness, colors, and "plink plink goes the water in the sink." By the nineteen fifties it began to look as if we were in for a kind of pernicious anemia of theme and plot, with language experiences in place of stories and pitter-patter in place of events. These books give the child back himself with little more—no rich entertainment, no additional insight, and no laughter. In the beginning a paucity of humor was characteristic of the here and nowists, and it was not until Beatrice Shenk de Regniers (see

Bibliography, Chapter 15) and Ruth Krauss began their books that hilarity entered in.

#### Ruth Krauss

##### *A Hole Is to Dig*

In 1947 Ruth Krauss' *Growing Story* caused no great stir. It was about a small boy who saw various things growing but did not realize that he too was lengthening until he tried on his last year's clothes. With *A Hole Is to Dig* (1952) Ruth Krauss proved herself a lineal descendant of Dorothy Baruch and an author about whom adults argued pro and con. This book was a series of definitions by children: "a hole is to dig," "a face is so you can make faces," "mud is to jump in and slide in and yell doodleedoodleedoo."<sup>1</sup> Adults immediately said, "How cute! And just like children." Boys and girls in the upper grades also got the joke and enjoyed experimenting with their own definitions: "ice is to suck and to fall down on," "trees are what you tear your pants on." This is conscious language play for children old enough to know what they are doing and to enjoy giving vent to their pent-up silliness.

*A Very Special House* is an imaginative spree by a small child who for once in his life does everything he shouldn't, such as drawing on the walls, jumping up and down on a bed, and shouting "ooie ooie ooie." And nobody ever says "stop stop stop." It ends riotously with a jump and a cadenced "dee dee dee oh." Herein lies Ruth Krauss' particular skill. These examples are not sufficiently extensive to show it, but she uses cadence so cleverly that it is as orderly and lyrical as verse.

Maurice Sendak's hilarious action pictures would predispose anyone to the texts. Like Margaret Wise Brown, Ruth Krauss has been fortunate in all her illustrators.

But what about the young children for whom these books are intended? Certainly such books make no intellectual demands on their attention. No continuity of plot or char-

<sup>1</sup>Copyright 1953 by Ruth Krauss.

acter development or relationships keep the children wondering or anticipating. Adults who read these books to children four to six years old frequently see a baffled, questioning look on their faces, a sort of "Are you spoofing us?" look. Some adults like to use the books with children, while others say the children are both bored and baffled by them. Many grown-ups object to their disjointed confusion and conscious cuteness of the show-off variety. The texts are often very funny to adults, and they are always cleverly written. Here are records of children's language, their antic nonsense and general hilarity. It is the formula of here and now, repetitional cadence, and sometimes awareness. Take it or leave it.

Meanwhile, side by side with this juvenile stream-of-consciousness kind of writing, other authors were proving that stories for children need not follow the "stylized conventions of the fairy tale," and could still be about something of significance and interest to the child. Taking the modern world for a setting, skilled writers have told stories with substance and meaning, plot stories that leave the child with fresh insight into the cause and effect of behavior and, in the process, furnish him with entertainment that manifests itself in his command, "Read it again."

### Margery Clark

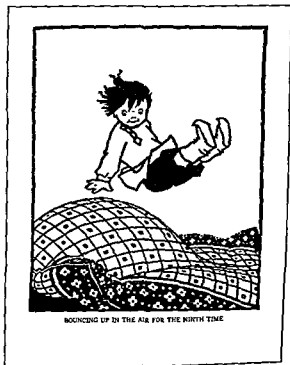
#### The Poppy Seed Cakes

One book of realistic tales which appeared a few years after Mrs. Mitchell's stories was nothing short of epoch-making. *The Poppy Seed Cakes* (1929) breaks every one of the

canons of realism which had been developed by Mrs. Mitchell. The stories have a Russian atmosphere with beautifully unfamiliar and mouth-filling names like Andrewshek, Erminka, and Auntie Katushka. The children roll them under their tongues and wish they had been given such splendid names. Every story in the series has a lively plot—something happens. Mostly the stories turn upon Andrewshek's irresponsibility. He starts bouncing on the feather bed, and the goose walks in and gobbles up every one of Auntie Katushka's poppy seed cakes. Andrewshek repents, but the next time he forgets to watch the picnic basket. Off it goes down the lake, propelled by a predatory swan (p. 485). Every story involves plenty of action and laughter.

Here are no stories by a formula but a book full of tales as gay and funny as any fanciful tale could possibly be. Boys recognize themselves in Andrewshek and so delight in his mishaps. Girls see themselves in Erminka with her passion for red boots. The stories have a warm, human atmosphere, which is

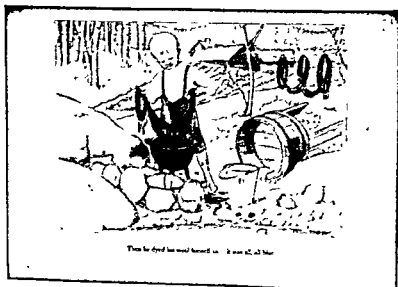
Illustration by Maud and Miska Petersham for *The Poppy Seed Cakes* by Margery Clark, Doubleday, 1941 (book 3¼ x 7¼)



*The Petershams' illustrations for The Poppy Seed Cakes are as lively and vigorous as the gay, humorous text. See also page 568.*

Illustration from Elsa Beskow's  
*Pelle's New Suit*, Harper (original  
 in color, book 12 x 8 3/4)

Even lacking the vivid colors  
 of the original, this picture  
 shows Elsa Beskow's illustra-  
 tive strength. Interest is  
 centered on the activity of the  
 boy, dipping the skeins in  
 the dye pot and hanging them  
 up to dry. The action is all  
 important, but the whole  
 composition, with distant  
 house, ploughed field, and  
 birch trees, is a thing  
 of beauty



Then he dyed his wool himself so it was all his

enhanced by the Petershams' gay illustrations.

No realism since *The Poppy Seed Cakes* has given young children greater joy. Yet this book was published with no fanfare, announcing the new realism at last. It was written by two young women, Mary E. Clark and Margery C. Quigley, who combined their names into the pleasant Margery Clark. It was selected by a great juvenile editor, May Massee, now of Viking Press. She knew just how fresh and fine these stories were—substantial in content, beautiful in style, unaffected and sound. It was this same editor who persuaded Marjorie Flack, an illustrator at that time, to begin writing her own stories, and so presently there were Miss Flack's *Angus and the Ducks* and *The Story About Ping*, to delight young children. Formulas and missions do not seem to produce great literature. Writers with a story to tell and editors sensitive to good English prose remain the most hopeful sources of a real literature for children.

Elsa Beskow  
*Pelle's New Suit*

The next good realism for the youngest came from the Swedish. It was a translation of *Pelle's New Suit* (1929), told and illustrated by Elsa Beskow.

The little boy, Pelle, needs a new suit. He raises his own lamb and then, for each person who helps him with his suit, he performs some useful service. He also watches the shearing of the sheep and sees the wool washed, carded, and spun into yarn. He helps with the dyeing and weaving and watches anxiously the important process of cutting the beautiful blue cloth into a suit to his measure. He follows the tailoring even as he assists the tailor. Finally, for his Sunday best he triumphantly wears his beautiful blue suit.

Here is a plot reduced to its lowest denominator, but what the story lacks in conflict and excitement it makes up in the intensity of its realism and the significance of the whole story. This is what Mrs. Mitchell was moving toward. A plot for small children need not have elaborate complications if it has enough meaning and significance as an explanation of the world in which they find themselves. Here is a story as spare of ornamentation as a loaf of bread, but, like bread, it is good to the taste, plain, wholesome, and nourishing. No pitter-patting, no furbelows, no meaningless action! Every episode is honestly chosen to tell an important story as clearly as possible. It is addressed to thinking children who love new clothes, for themselves, to be sure, but who are also reason-



*In these simply sketched figures the modern child recognizes himself and his neighborhood friends. Miss Haywood's illustration gives no hint of the fact that she is also a portrait painter.*

ably interested in how things come to be. Pelle had the good luck to be right there at the source of supplies. Children follow his experiences with sensible and satisfied absorption, and the story gives them new insight. Mrs. Beskow's bright pictures are as clear and fresh and interesting as her text. The whole book commands the adult's respect and the child's devotion. This honest bit of realism is already a children's classic.

#### Maj Lindman

##### Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Red Shoes

Sweden produced another bright picture-story—*Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Red Shoes* by Maj Lindman. The adventures of these three little boys, earning money to buy their mother a coveted pair of red shoes for her birthday, come close to crossing the borderline into the fanciful. One boy hires himself to a miller, one to a painter, and one to a chimney sweep. They emerge from their work completely white, red, and black, respectively, so that Mother at first does not recognize her boys. Young children consider this the very essence of humor and invariably giggle appreciatively over the horrifying appearance of Snipp, Snapp, and Snurr. The conclusion, with the presentation of the glorious red shoes, is completely satisfying, because, incidentally, this mother is one in a hundred—she does not scold; she laughs, and all ends merrily. Realistic stories are so apt to be grave and earnest that the broad humor of this story is especially gratifying. Maj Lindman's fanciful *Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Gingerbread* is also humorous, but after that her books become too obviously moralistic.



#### Lois Lenski

##### The Little Auto and other stories

Children's literature owes much to Lois Lenski, who sketches as cleverly as she writes. She has a sure knowledge of children and engages in meticulous research for everything she does, from little verses for the two-year-old to historical and regional fiction for the teen age. It is easy to account for the popularity of her gay pictures of *Susie Mariar* or the interest in her historical novels such as *Blueberry Corners*, or her regional *Strawberry Girl*.<sup>1</sup> But apparently no grown-up fully understands the fascination of her *Little Auto* for the two- to five-year-olds. Librarians, teachers, and mothers who have to read this book aloud over and over, knowing full well that the child can recite every word of it, are

<sup>1</sup>See p. 422 for Lois Lenski's regional stories.

Illustration from Lois Lenski's *The Little Auto*,  
Oxford, 1934 (original in color, book 7 x 7)

Here is the adored Mr. Small. These clear,  
uncomplicated pictures and the straightforward  
text are invariably popular with young children

baffled by its hypnotic power over their  
youngest.

It tells in pictures with the briefest possible  
captions a day in the life of Mr. Small and his  
little auto. He takes it out of the garage,  
drives downtown, obeys all the traffic laws,  
parks the little auto, and eventually drives it  
safely home. No plot, no problems, no con-  
flict—a complete and docile obedience to all  
safety rules, rewarded by a shining and virtu-  
ous serenity or, perhaps, security. This story  
may sound priggish and tame, but somehow it  
isn't. A three-year-old digs into every detail,  
and Miss Lenski has not missed one. The child  
studies the pictures intently; he broods over  
them lovingly and repeats the captions, which  
by now seem fairly obvious. The adult closes  
the book at the end with a shamefaced sense  
of relief, but the youngest reopens it firmly  
and the grown-up finds himself beginning  
once more to intone the ritual of Mr. Small  
and the little auto.

Its great virtue is undoubtedly its un-  
adorned simplicity. Here is honest writing,  
the attempt to tell a straightforward narra-  
tive so that a young child can understand  
every detail of something that is really com-  
plicated. Nothing important is omitted; noth-  
ing trivial or extraneous is included. It is more  
fact than fiction, more information than story.  
Yet Mr. Small is a real person to the young  
reader. Undoubtedly, the child identifies him-  
self with the competent Mr. Small. Perils lie  
on all sides of Mr. Small, but with masterly  
presence of mind he always does the right  
thing. "That's just what I do when I drive,"  
commented a four-year-old.

*The Little Sail Boat, The Little Airplane,  
The Little Farm, The Little Train, and The*



*Little Fire Engine* follow similar patterns, but  
the train book with *Engineer Small* comes  
next in popularity. It goes into more compli-  
cated details than *The Little Auto* and is ap-  
preciated by children of seven. They study it  
with profound seriousness. After all, learning  
a trade is no smiling matter, and apparently  
that is what the child is up to when he pores  
over these books. You see him later running  
his own train in *Engineer Small's* best man-  
ner, and his soliloquies reflect the influence  
of the *Small* terminology. To have written  
career books for the nursery is no mean  
achievement, and Miss Lenski has accom-  
plished this task with honest competence and  
not a hint of affectation or pedantry.

The line drawings she makes for most of  
her own books are sparing of details but get  
the maximum characterization, action, and  
drollery into the fewest lines. The "Little"  
books are done with a soft crayon wash  
which gives Mr. Small and his machines a  
pleasant rotundity and depth. There is a  
blandness about the *Small* clan that is amus-  
ing to adults but properly grave to children.

**Marjorie Flack**

Wait for William

Even before the earnest Mr. Small had ap-  
peared in *The Little Auto*, Marjorie Flack had  
begun her famous series about the Scotch

So Charles waited, and Nancy waited, and all their friends waited, while William tied the shoestring in a good firm knot and

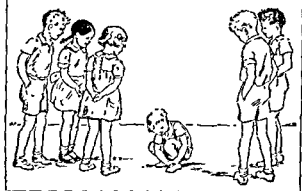


Illustration from Marjorie Flack's *Wait for William*, Houghton Mifflin, 1935 (book 8¼ x 7½)

Clear, honest drawing to match a simple, direct text. Marjorie Flack combines both in her excellent books for small children. See also page 471.

terrier, Angus, which is discussed in Chapter 17. Unlike the Lenski series, every one of Marjorie Flack's little books has a clearly defined plot and delightful humor. Children chuckle over them, study the pictures, and demand more about Angus. The list of Miss Flack's picture-stories for young children is a long one, and there is not a poor book in the group. It is easy for adults who have to read these books aloud to understand their appeal. Not only are they well told and gaily illustrated, but they are *about* something. Marjorie Flack is a careful craftsman, and her narratives are as lovingly worked over and perfected as her bright pictures.

*Wait for William* is a delightful "here and now" story whose whole plot turns on a small boy's struggle to get his shoelaces tied. Any four-year-old understands and sympathizes with William's predicament.

On his way to watch a circus parade, being hurried of course by the older children, who never pay any attention when he pleads with them to wait, William just *has* to stop to tie his shoelaces. When he finishes, the children have vanished. Things look dark for William, until suddenly the very parade he was waiting for overtakes him. Moreover, he is lifted high on the top of the elephant by a sympathetic circus man and allowed to ride with the parade. Imagine the amazement of the older children when William goes by and waves to

them from his exalted post on the elephant's back. Never, never again will they run away from William. Never again will they fail to help him with his shoelaces. From then on they'll gladly "wait for William." A more joyous story of the humble being exalted and the meek inheriting the earth was never told.

Marjorie Flack, it is said, not satisfied with privately working over her little story patterns, submits them to the critical responses of two different school groups, whose reactions help her to determine the final form of these tales. This perhaps accounts for their unflagging popularity with children everywhere. Some of these books, certainly *Ping* (p. 471), have become permanent nursery favorites.

Marjorie Flack's pictures have few details, clear, bright colors, and delightful action. They really illustrate. Often the text is an obvious caption for the picture which has already made the episode clear. Her books are picture-stories in the best sense of the word—glorified comic strips which are genuinely comic in the child's sense and which tell through pictures a carefully worked-out plot-story reinforced by words.

#### Alvin Tresselt

White Snow, Bright Snow

#### Leo Politi

Juanita

Midway between the awareness and the theme-plot schools of writing for young children lie the charming picture-stories of Alvin Tresselt and Leo Politi. Mr. Tresselt constructs his stories from the *thinnest of threads*—a change in the weather or season. But with Roger Duvoisin's pictures, these themes develop a real sense of drama. In rhythmic prose Mr. Tresselt tells about the coming of snow

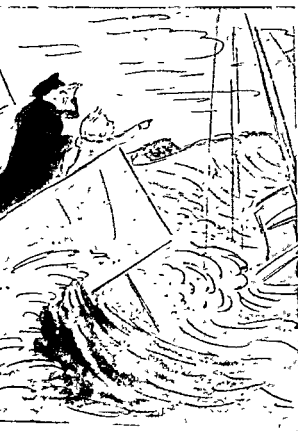


Illustration by Edward Ardizzone from his *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain*. Reproduced by permission of the Oxford University Press. (book 7½ x 10, picture 6½ x 7)

*No black and white can reproduce the beauty of Ardizzone's water-color seascapes. But what does come through is the crucial danger of this storm, and young Tim's unflinching aplomb!*

and those he has illustrated for other authors is to realize that he is more of an artist than a writer. His landscapes and his gay, skipping children are unforgettable.

### Edward Ardizzone

#### *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain*

Even young children need a touch of wildness now and then, which is precisely what the English Mr. Ardizzone gives them in his spirited account of Tim's adventures at sea. It all starts with Tim, who plays in and out of boats on the beach. How he becomes a stow-away, learns to be an efficient if reluctant deck hand, and experiences shipwreck and a hair-raising rescue in company with the Captain makes a thrilling story for the five- to eight-year-olds. Mr. Ardizzone's water colors are as vigorous as his tale. No wonder his own small boy liked the book. All small boys and little girls as well like it. Here is realism for the youngest at its most adventurous level. If this isn't here and now, the children wish to goodness it were! Mr. Ardizzone has continued Tim's adventures through several books, and every one is a delight to share with children. But the big, imposing first edition of *Tim and the Brave Sea Captain* has been sadly reduced, and the glorious seascapes suffer from the trimming.

### Carolyn Haywood

#### "B" Is for Betsy

#### Little Eddie

With the *Betsy* and the *Little Eddie* books of Carolyn Haywood, children progress from the picture-story to the story, illustrated, but with the pictures of secondary importance to

or rain, wind or a big storm, spring or autumn. These little everyday miracles of the weather he makes exciting, something to be watched and enjoyed, never feared. Text and pictures are full of reassurance and beauty. *White Snow, Bright Snow* (1947) won the Caldecott Medal for Mr. Duvosin.

Mr. Politi records with simple text and enchanting pictures some slight episode in the lives of small children, frequently those belonging to a homogeneous racial group within one of our American cities. *Pedro, the Angel of Olvera Street* and *Juanita* are both about Los Angeles' Olvera Street Mexican-Americans. *Juanita* describes their Easter Even ceremony—the Blessing of the Animals. The narrative and pictures have the gentle loveliness of the occasion. Our modern children need this tenderness, gentleness, and beauty. To look through Mr. Politi's books

the tale. Another mark of increasing maturity is that against a familiar background of family life, the heroes or heroines are moving into a widening circle of neighborhood and school adventures, camps, even travel.

"*B*" *Is for Betty* (1939) launched the series of books about the everyday activities of an everyday little girl in suburbia. Children took Betsy to their hearts immediately. As she grew with each succeeding book, her experiences widened, much as they do in any good set of readers. Other books, about other characters in Betsy's circle of friends, appeared each year. But whether the story was about Betsy or Star or Peter and Penny or the twins, the characters remained very close to stereotypes. It was the interpretation of their activities or the problems connected with school or camp or the school policeman or vacation or typical mistakes and accidents that held the attention of young readers. These gave the child greater self-knowledge, more understanding of other people and experiences, and a greater confidence in approaching the next level of life.

### Forerunners of realism for older children

Before examining present-day realistic stories for older children, it will be helpful to review some of the classics of this group—*Tom Sawyer* (1876), *Huckleberry Finn* (1885), and *Little Women* (1868). The innumerable stories of children of other lands began with *Hans Brinker* (1865) and *Heidi* (1884), which will be discussed in the next chapter.

#### Samuel L. Clemens (Mark Twain)

Tom Sawyer

Huckleberry Finn

Compared with the Mark Twain pair, recent fiction for children is far tamer, more cleaned-up and respectable, less adventurous. Tom introduced children to the seamy side of village life seventy years ago. At that time, moving pictures, radios, superhighways, super cars, and super gasoline had not tied the

With *Little Eddie* (1947) Carolyn Haywood developed a real boy, and laughter began. Eddie is as earnest as Betsy, but much more alive. He is an avid collector of "valuables" which his long-suffering family calls "junk." But the family endures patiently even the acquisition of an old but full-sized fire engine. However, Gardenia the goat is too much for Father, and Eddie and his pet are banished to an uncle's ranch, far, far away. The picture of ranch life is a bit vague, but not Eddie. He saves Gardenia's life but remains definitely Eddie, traveling home with the largest miscellany of "valuables" ever collected. In the next book, *Eddie's Pay Dirt*, our hero is confronted with a grave ethical problem. His father helps him to see it, but leaves the decision to Eddie. *Eddie and His Big Deals* shows many signs of maturity.

These well-written little stories have a warmth and a directness that win and hold young readers and even the read-to group. The books have grown progressively better over the years, and Eddie has emerged as the full-length portrait of a real boy.

small towns so intimately to the large cities that there was little difference between the two. There in *Tom Sawyer* was the isolated country town Samuel Clemens himself had grown up in, with respectable churchgoers on one side and the village ne'er-do-wells on the other. Tom was the link between the two groups. By way of his friendship with Huck, the son of the town drunkard, he knew all the shady characters as well as his Aunt Polly's churchgoing friends. He saw a grave robbery and a murder and had other adventures which to the modern child are as incredible as those in any radio serial he may listen to and quite as hair-raising.

Since *Tom Sawyer* was written, children's literature has fallen largely into the hands of women—teachers, librarians, and juvenile editors. Would Tom have passed some of these modern censors of subject matter for

children's books? Perhaps not, but at least the book is still recommended. It has, however, been pushed higher and higher in the schools until it has finally come to rest in junior or senior high-school book lists—partly because it is stiff reading for the masses of poor readers, who probably will not be able to read it at high-school level either. Its appeal is to children around ten, eleven, and twelve. At those ages, it gives them chills up and down their spinal columns. Few books do this for children today. For spinal chills, they go unerringly to the comics, radio thrillers, and movie horror tales. Men produce these, with no punches pulled. Is it possible that the ladies have so overrefined children's literature that youngsters have to hunt their robust thrills outside books?

Reread *Tom Sawyer* and see if it doesn't give you a thrill, too. But it is not lurid sensationalism. Along with the excitement and the humor, notice the steady emergence of the boy's code. He keeps his word to a friend; he may be scared to death, but he sees things through. In real peril, he protects a weaker person. He uses his head, keeps cool, and keeps trying. This is as good a code today as it ever was, and for youngsters who are never going to be able to read about Tom and Huck, moving-picture companies should show authentic versions of these books yearly.

Adult critics are likely to consider *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* superior to *Tom*, but most children like *Tom* better. *Huckleberry* is written in the first person, for one thing, and the vernacular is harder to read. Also *Tom* is closer to the average child, more understandable than *Huck*, although to some of our city gangs, *Huck*, if they could read him, might make a stronger appeal. *Tom Sawyer* is one book every American should have at some stage of his life.

Louisa M. Alcott  
*Little Women*

*Little Women* deals with a family of four girls of teen age, but it is the preadolescent girls to whom this book makes the greatest

appeal, because of their interest in what lies just ahead, their first sense of romance, their dream of being grown up. Girls today enjoy *Little Women* as much as their grandmothers did. To most girls, the March sisters are contemporaries as like them under the odd clothes as if they wore shorts and did ski jumps. There are several books in the series, but none of them, not even *Little Men*, has quite the ageless quality of *Little Women*, and none is quite so dear to every generation. Here is the first great juvenile novel of family life—a warm, loving family group, struggling with poverty and with individual problems but sustained by an abiding affection for each other and an innocent kind of gaiety that could make its own fun. This is just the kind of home group every child would like to belong to—struggles and all. Not until the Laura Ingalls Wilder series (p. 441) or perhaps Hilda Van Stockum's *The Cottage at Bantry Bay* (p. 406), or Margot Benary-Isbert's *The Ark* do we again encounter such a picture of a family. None of these recent examples is any better, and in no one of them is each member of the group so distinctly drawn as are the unforgettable Beth, Jo, Meg, and Amy. We know these girls as well as we know any living people. Here is characterization that makes each girl a real human being—exasperating, lovable, heroic, absurd, delightful. Modern writers may well go back to this old book to study its vivid portrayal of people. These characters live today for every adult reader who met them in childhood.

In spite of the fact that the March family is eminently respectable and that the girls are idealistic and often noble, the story never lapses into sentimentality. It is quite as full of humor, of a different sort, as *Tom Sawyer*. The humor is decidedly feminine, but it bubbles up in almost every chapter. There is tragedy in the story, too, but not even the sadness of Beth's dying has a false note in it or is even remotely sentimental. In all juvenile literature there is no better example of facing the poignancy of a family loss.

*Little Women* is no less important for girls today than it ever was. It establishes ideals of family life which they may carry with them and try to realize sometime, somewhere. There is a wholesome introduction to romance, to the responsibilities and joys of a happy marriage, and to the inevitability of death even among loved ones, who, because they are loved, seem somehow invulnerable. There is a continuity in social relationships, with the home as the necessary core of all happy living. These concepts are as important to growing girls as the boys' code in *Tom Sawyer* is to boys. Both provide insight into group loyalties and group living, not didactically analyzed and underscored but emerging unobtrusively from absorbing stories.

#### Frances Hodgson Burnett

##### *The Secret Garden and other stories*

For a long period after *Tom Sawyer* and *Little Women* appeared, there was as little substantial realism for older children as there was for the youngest. Of course the books by Frances Hodgson Burnett, which began in 1877 with *That Lass o' Lowrie's* and continued until the last book came out in 1922, span the gap between these older books and those realistic stories which are comparatively recent.

When *Little Lord Fauntleroy* was published in 1886, it is said to have "caused a delirium of joy." The moving pictures did beautifully by it several years ago and on the strength of that performance big, husky sixth-graders got it out of the library to read. Their disillusionment was violent. Cedric, they said, was "a pill," a "sad sack," and worse. Not so the girls. They thought he was "sweet." Probably, even in 1886, the "delirium" sounded a soprano note. *Editha's Burglar*, published the same year, was almost as wildly popular, and *Sara Crewe* (1888) equaled *Fauntleroy*. On stage and in films as *The Little Princess*, *Sara Crewe* many years later enjoyed a second period of popularity. Other books followed in rapid succession, and little girls of the decorous nineties acquired sets of Frances

Hodgson Burnett which were the envy of their less fortunate friends.

These stories purported to be realistic, but what fairy tales they were! Both *Fauntleroy* and *Sara Crewe* began by being painfully "poor" but ended, through sheer personal charm, in almost regal opulence. The *Fauntleroy* lad passed out of the common sphere entirely by landing in the peerage. Editha encountered a burglar, a hard-looking crook, who after one visit with the girl was restored to the good life.

Over a quarter of a century after *Fauntleroy*, Mrs. Burnett wrote *The Secret Garden* (1909), which has maintained a following of devoted readers to this very day. It, too, tells a fairy tale of unimaginable riches, of children misunderstood and suffering but conquering all. Mrs. Burnett enjoys describing great wealth and then showing how it often brings neither a normal nor a happy life—very consoling to those who do not possess such wealth. The heroine of *The Secret Garden*, Mary, is plain and bad tempered as well as orphaned and neglected. In the huge estate where she is sent to live, Mary discovers a secret garden, a master with a crooked back, and his ailing son, Colin. Martha, the hearty Yorkshire maid, provides a poor but healthy contrast, and Martha's little brother, Dickon, is the very spirit of the earth as is his wise, kind mother, who has love enough for her own brood of twelve and for the poor little rich children besides. Among them, they get the wretched Colin into the secret garden with Mary. Under Dickon's guidance, the children make the garden grow and bloom once more, without realizing that in the process they, too, will grow and bloom.

Dickon is as unreal as *Fauntleroy*, but Mary, sour and homely, and Colin, with his temper tantrums, amuse the children and carry conviction. In spite of the heavy metaphysical suggestion at the close of the story about the "magic" of the earth and right thinking, this book is probably Mrs. Burnett's most lasting contribution. She could write a spellbinding story, a romantic kind of child-

hood fantasy, Cinderella plus! She wrote delightfully, too, but perhaps some of the continued popularity of *The Secret Garden* is due to the nostalgic fondness of adults for

its hazily remembered charms. "Do you remember *The Secret Garden*?" they murmur, and press it tenderly but firmly upon their children and their children's children.

## The modern scene in America and Great Britain

Samuel L. Clemens and Louisa M. Alcott wrote good realistic stories for children during the nineteenth century, but few authors of children's books in the years that followed could get away from the curse of didacticism. Youngsters, not being articulate about their literary needs, could not say, "Isn't it high time someone wrote stories about just plain everyday children like us?" It was time, and finally someone did, and then others followed suit. Today, children have a wide selection of lively realistic stories which reflect excitingly their own modern world.

### Arthur Ransome

#### Swallows and Amazons and other tales

After the publication of *Old Peter's Russian Tales* (p. 254), Arthur Ransome started a series of stories about English children living in the Lake district of England. These are so popular with some children that they read every book in the series.

*Swallows and Amazons* (1931) is the first of them. "The Swallows" are the four Walker children, who wish to camp out completely on their own. When Mother cables their seafaring father for permission, he cables back, "Better drowned than duffers if not duffers won't drown." Decidedly the children are not duffers. They set up shipshape living quarters on their island, establish a regular schedule, get their supplies by sailing to the mainland in their own boat, and have as little to do with the "natives" (grown-ups) as possible. The Blackett girls are the "Amazons," and quite as seasoned sailors as the Walkers. The two tribes agree to make war on each other, with amusing results and considerable excitement. Cry children may wonder why they weren't all drowned, but lake-raised or seacoast children will understand.

*Swallowdale* and *Peter Duck* continue the adventures of these two intrepid gangs, still in the Lake setting. *Winter Holiday* introduces two more young people to the same environment, with snow and ice to wrestle with instead of water and winds. So the series continues. Some of the adventures are genuinely hair-raising, but they are possible for well-trained, competent children, and they are just such adventures as every normal child dreams of.

The outstanding characteristic of these Ransome children is their competence. They know how to cook, clean fish, sail a boat, do their own laundry, scour their pans with sand, take care of themselves in a storm, on land or lake. They meet every emergency with resourcefulness and intelligence. No one talks about courage. It is taken for granted like cleanliness and a decent sense of responsibility. Their other striking characteristic is their power to plan and sustain these tremendous games of make-believe that last for days or weeks. These games are the plots of the stories—the children lay down the rules of the game and then the action starts.

The outdoor atmosphere of these stories is invaluable for indoor children. Everything happens outdoors. It is indeed almost impossible to imagine the Walkers and Blacketts cribbed and confined in schoolrooms or houses. You wonder if they don't perhaps carry their mattresses to the roofs for the winter and become arctic explorers. You also hope their mothers ply them with sufficient greens and milk during the winter to compensate for their somewhat sketchy holiday diets and their amazing consumption of strong British tea.

The nautical phraseology of these stories, together with the Britishisms, makes them



Illustration by Louis Darling for  
Henry Huggins by Beverly Cleary,  
Morrow, 1950 (book 5½ x 7¼,  
picture 4 x 2½)

Henry and Ribsy brood over the possible profits in guppy raising. The Darling pictures show enterprising young America in realistic predicaments that are recognized and chuckled over by children everywhere. His girls are no more beautiful than his boys, endowed with the same fiendish energy. These are distinctly not little darlings.



heavy going for many readers. Good readers skip a lot of the nautical stuff, but the poor reader is bogged down with it and gives up.

One of the things children ought to learn in reading is the art of skipping, and with a little help on the first book more children could and would enjoy the whole series. Take this example, for instance, from *Secret Water*:

John hauled on the line that made the jib roll neatly up on itself, made fast so that it should not unroll again, and clambered back into the crowded cockpit. Already the *Goblin* had left the *Secret Water* and was in the creek, moving more slowly now, under mainsail only, between green shores.

"Keep her as she's going," said Daddy, and went forward to deal with the anchor. There was the grumble and rattle of chain being hauled up and ranged on deck. Then Daddy was busy at the mast. . . . Suddenly he flung out his right arm.

"Starboard," he said quietly, and John steered towards the western bank.

"Now. Right round into the wind. Helm hard over." John swung her round and the sail split the wind, and flapped heavily as the *Goblin* headed back across the creek.

Splash!

The anchor was down, and Daddy was paying out chain. He was at the mast again. The boom lifted over their heads in the cockpit, and the sail came down with a run.

"Two tiers," said Daddy. "We shan't need more."

In a minute or two, he had bundled the sail along the boom and put a couple of tiers to hold it there. (pp 27-28)

Such a passage offers two alternatives: (1) careful reading (with every unfamiliar word looked up and the sailing behavior of the characters painstakingly interpreted) and (2) skimming or skipping. If the first policy is pursued throughout a Ransome book, there won't be anything left of the story for the unhappy inland reader to whom it is just so much gibberish. To a child who sails, such details are meaningful and amusing, but it is quite otherwise with inland readers. What they should be taught to do with such passages as this is to skim down the page to the understandable phrases which tell them what's really going on: "Already the *Goblin* had left the *Secret Water* and was in the creek. . . . John steered towards the western bank. . . . The anchor was down. . . ." These phrases are enough to make it clear that the boat is headed for shore and the family is about to make a landing, let jibs and mainsail fall where they will.

Chapters 9 and 12 commented on the necessity of clearing up key words for children in either poetry or stories. Older children should learn to get the meaning through

recognition of key words or phrases. This technique is needed, but of course it should not begin until reading skills are well established.

The enthusiasm of the Ransome initiates should prove contagious. One little girl had read *Swallows and Amazons* eight times and then felt she must write to Arthur Ransome about it. He responded by postal card with maps of the lake, and their correspondence continued. In another family, five children were being taken abroad for the first time. The one thing they held out for, to the last child, was a visit to the Lake district—not to see Wordsworth's home but to locate all the places where the Swallows' adventures took place. Mr. Ransome is happily quite definite about locale. In *Five Years of Children's Books*, Bertha Mahony and Elinor Whitney explain how *Winter Holiday* happened to be dedicated "To the Clan McEoch of Francis Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts." The McEoch children decided to try it for themselves—two weeks on a Maine island, "quite aloof from the 'natives' . . . scouring our pots and pans with sand and being proper 'Swallows.'" Then they wrote Arthur Ransome about their island, and their account of it resulted in the stirring dedication. Surely it is worth while to help slow readers get into at least one of these books which turn everyday living into superlative adventure.

#### Noel Streatfeild

##### The Shoes stories

Another Britisher and another popular series are Noel Streatfeild and her "Shoes" books. These extremely gay tales are all vocational in their themes, but they manage to avoid the heavy earnestness that generally pervades such books.

In the first story, *Ballet Shoes*, the three Fossil children determine to become famous, so famous that their names will be in every history book. One is going to be a dancer, one a moving picture star, and one an aviator. This book follows particularly the training of the would be ballerina in the Academy of

Dancing and Stage Training. The work is hard; there are bitter disappointments and also moments of triumph as brief as they are rare, but always the child's own unwavering determination to succeed keeps her working. How such a story manages to be as gay as it is rests entirely with Noel Streatfeild's ability to make everyday events somehow amusing.

*Tennis Shoes* develops a champion of the nets, but for most children not so professionally minded as the Streatfeild children, *Circus Shoes* and *Theater Shoes* are the favorites. In *Circus Shoes* we meet poor Peter and Santa, who have been raised to be excessively genteel and never to appear outdoors without their gloves! Suddenly they find themselves running away to the only relative they have left in the world, an unknown Uncle Gus, of Cob's Circus. Uncle Gus is as horrified by his genteel relatives as the poor children are by the rough and ready life of the circus. Presently it begins to dawn upon Peter and Santa that they are surrounded by experts and perfectionists. These circus people are artists, even the seals and the poodles; and the children realize their own clumsy helplessness. The account of their getting acquainted with their circus friends, who help them make a beginning in this new life, and the story of their struggles and meager successes make glorious reading for the nine- to twelve-year-olds.

For the child with a special interest in tennis or ballet or any sort of theatrical life, these books are invaluable. They take a serious attitude toward professions and amplify the difficulties without minimizing the satisfactions.

#### Hilda Van Stockum

The Cottage at Bantry Bay  
Francie on the Run  
Pegeen  
The Mitchells

Having spent a childhood divided between Holland and Ireland, and now raising her own family in the United States, Hilda Van Stockum writes delightful stories of family

*This is evidently the cow "with the bull look" to judge by her rampaging. Hilda Van Stockum's drawings add humor and deft characterization to her stories.*

life in all three countries. Children never think of the Irish twins, Francie and Liam, or the tomboy Pegeen as children of a foreign land. They are merely country children, like the mountaineer children of *Down Down the Mountain* (p. 421).

*The Cottage at Bantry Bay* is the first of the series dealing with the O'Sullivan family. The mother and father are poor in this world's goods but rich in understanding and love. Michael and Brigid are resourceful older children, who, entrusted with considerable money, successfully negotiate a perilous journey over the mountains. The twins are alike only in being forever in hot water, and their dog is in more scrapes than the twins. There is Paddy the Piper, who manages picnics and fairs for the children, and there is a wild cow with "a bull look," which complicates life for everyone. Francie has a clubfoot and there is no money to have it cared for, but this misfortune does not bother Francie, only his mother and father. There are mishaps and sadness, gaiety and triumph in this charming story, but the center of it all is the love of the family for each member of the group. Every episode is satisfying, and the fine human relationships of these obscure people make the book memorable.

*Francie on the Run* is a surprising sequel. Money is obtained to have Francie's foot taken care of. A successful operation is performed, but before Francie can be officially discharged from the large city hospital, he walks out. Of course he heads in the wrong direction. Everyone tries to aid this beguiling imp; he has a wonderful time and goes farther and farther astray. Cards to his family lessen their anxiety somewhat, but it is weeks before he gets home, no worse for his traveling and



"What's afraid of a mouse, now?"

much richer in experiences. The reader likewise journeys all over Dublin and a good part of the rest of Ireland with the redoubtable Francie, encountering all manner of strange people, most of whom respond kindly and mistakenly to the angelic-looking young rascal.

In the story of *Pegeen*, Francie is safely home, and a new child, an orphan, shares the love of the O'Sullivan family. Pegeen has a gift for mischief and unintentioned misdeeds equaled only by her ability to extricate herself from her scrapes. The twins adore her and share her escapades with unfaltering loyalty. Always there hangs over their heads the dread day when Pegeen will have to leave them and go to her only relative in America. The happy solution of this problem makes a heart-warming conclusion to the trilogy.

Mrs. Van Stockum's *The Mitchells* is an amusing picture of family life in the United States during war times. Her own lively family of six children undoubtedly provides her



Illustration by Louis Slobodkin for *The Middle Moffat* by Eleanor Estes, Harcourt, Brace, 1942 (book 5 x 7 3/4)

*Louis Slobodkin with only a few lines puts vigor, movement, and personality into small figures. These apparently careless drawings are so rich in meaning that beside them many an elaborate illustration seems empty. In the Moffat books you will find children and adults in every variety of mood and action, and invariably funny.*

with plenty of material for storymaking, but only an artist could convert the raw stuff of everyday life into the warm, humorous pictures of family life Mrs. Van Stockum's books give.

**Eleanor Estes**  
The Moffat stories

Within the United States the most captivating modern book family of recent times is unquestionably "the Moffats," created by Eleanor Estes. There are three of these books now—*The Moffats*, *The Middle Moffat*, and *Rufus M*. Some grown-ups consider either *Rufus M* or *The Middle Moffat* the best of the series, but the children like them all. Here are books in which, for once, children and adults see eye to eye on humor.

The adults in these stories are relegated to the dim background. They are usually in

a dither or a fog and rarely understand what the children are up to. The children are equally baffled by the adults, who, well-meaning but oddly dense, wander in and out of their lives, adding to the confusion. Meanwhile, the children go their own way and live their own secret lives, planning intensely and always surprised at the way things turn out.

There is no general theme, no long suspense, and no exciting climax to these books. Each chapter is merely another episode in the life of one of the Moffats. There is dancing school in the genteel atmosphere of Moose Hall with a moose's head looking down severely upon the agonized contortions of the young. Or there is Janey's well-meaning attempt to give a recital, where the ladies she has lured in to listen to her find themselves suddenly enveloped in a cloud of moths from the old organ. All the children do their earnest best. Rufus M. is fired with ambition to possess a library card, but his vicissitudes in trying to get one rival those of Odysseus. Indeed, Odysseus was probably no more surprised to end up in Polyphemus' cave than was Rufus M. to land finally in the bowels of the library coal cellar.

The funniest episode, however, is Janey's performance in a dramatization of "The Three Bears" (p. 486). She carries on mostly without her middle-bear's head, which she mislaid, and she finishes with it on backward, after it has been hastily retrieved and chucked over her head.

Eleanor Estes was awarded the Newbery Medal for *Ginger Pye*. It is not up to the standard of the Moffat books, but she well deserved the Medal as an accumulative award

for a unique contribution to children's books.

### Louis Slobodkin—Moffat-maker

The ultimate humor in these Moffat situations is touched off, like a firecracker with a match, by the artist—Louis Slobodkin. The Moffat tales and Mr. Slobodkin's illustrations represent the perfect union of story and pictures. Probably even Mrs. Estes cannot see one of her own Moffats other than as Mr. Slobodkin has drawn him. Rufus M. leaping for a deadly catch in a baseball game; Janey catapulting through big girls with her middy up and her bloomers down, to say nothing of her stockings; Janey, again, viewing the world amiably from an upside-down angle, looking between her own stout legs, head almost on the ground—these are children you see daily.

No comic books were ever like these small pen-and-ink sketches with their unerring characterization, their humor, their skill in recording the well-meaning efforts of earnest but inept human beings. These pictures are obviously drawn by an artist who likes people, who enjoys them as they are without wishing to tidy them up and make them quite otherwise. They are also drawn with a sense of a body under the clothes. Here are legs which support a well-rounded and substantial frame, postures so full of suggested movement that the child seems ready to break into a run.

It is surprising to learn that the creator of these tiny figures is the sculptor of a monumental Lincoln in the Department of the Interior building, Washington, D.C., and of other huge and magnificent figures. To turn from marble and bronze to pen-and-ink figures in small sizes is an amazing feat, but it is hardly more astonishing than the variety and liveliness of those sketches. In his Caldecott acceptance speech, Mr. Slobodkin said that he had drawn so many of these little pictures that his wife used to shush the baby by telling him "Papa's making Moffats." Indeed, most people can never be resigned to the bestowal of the Caldecott Award upon

Mr. Slobodkin for his illustrations of James Thurber's *Many Moons* with its frail, wishy-washy princess. Obviously, he should have received it for his hundreds of stout, ram-bunctious Moffats. Anyone will be attracted to the Moffat books just by their pictures, but when Mrs. Estes' beguiling yarns of Moffat goings-on are added to them, there is a combination in realism that is inimitable.

### Elizabeth Enright

#### The Saturdays and other stories

Mrs. Enright has a gift for realism, and her Melendy children in *The Saturdays*, *The Four Story Mistake*, and *Then There Were Five* are as popular with the ten-, eleven-, and twelve-year-olds as *The Moffats* are with children just a little younger. *The Saturdays* introduces the four Melendys, ranging in age from six to thirteen, and deals with their \$1.60 Saturdays. These are achieved by pooling all their allowances and by permitting one child to use the whole amount for a Saturday on his own. The results are often startling and always amusing. Their adventures in New York City are characteristic of each child, and only poor Mona comes to grief with her experiment. The *Four Story Mistake* and *Then There Were Five* continue the family activities in the country and lead to the adoption of a country boy. All three books show these Melendy children not only playing as children do but also carrying regular responsibilities, learning new types of work, and, like the Streatfeild youngsters, thinking of a future career. Indeed, the Melendys are as professionally minded as the *Ballet Shoes* children and have as much fun as the Swallow and Amazon crews. Both in the country and in the city, the Melendys are shown in a typical household setting where beds must be made, grass cut, canning done. This setting makes the stories more usual but none the less entertaining, as their popularity attests. The characterization of each child is thorough and consistent. The father, although often away or busy, is nevertheless a force in the children's lives and always concerned about them. "Cuffy," the housekeeper, hovers

in the background, too, but her surprised approval every now and then marks some child's growth in skill or maturity. The affectionate relationships of all members of the family make these books unusually pleasant pictures of home life.

The Newbery Medal was given to Mrs. Enright's *Thimble Summer*. Here is the germ of a family story which developed more successfully in her Melendy family. The setting of *Thimble Summer* is a Midwestern farm in the midst of a burning drouth. Just as the drouth is broken by a drenching rain, Garnet finds a silver thimble, which she is convinced will bring her a lucky summer. Certainly exciting events follow rapidly. Garnet, her friend Citronella, the boys, and the adults are an entertaining group, and Mrs. Enright's illustrations are pleasant additions.

**Robert McCloskey**

*Make Way for Ducklings*

The Caldecott Medal was awarded to *Make Way for Ducklings* (1941), an almost realistic story of a mother duck who herds her ducklings from the Charles River through heavy traffic to the Boston Public Garden. Pictures and story are delightful, and so are Mr. McCloskey's two picture-stories about his young daughter. In *Blueberries for Sal* a bear cub and Sal follow the wrong mothers up the mountain, but all ends serenely. In *One Morning in Maine* Sal is confronted by one of life's uncertainties—her tooth falls out. Once she is convinced that she will get bigger and better teeth, Sal goes on her way rejoicing. All three books are in constant demand by the youngest children.

Perhaps Robert McCloskey's most popular book is *Homer Price*. This book, for older children, is a rare commentary on the modern child. On p. 582, the "soda jerker" is wiping glasses; Homer is inhaling a coke through a straw; another boy is lost in the pages of the "Super-Duper" comic magazine, while a small child sits on his heels in front of a rack of comics. He is luxuriously licking an ice-cream cone as he broods lovingly

over "Crime Does Not Pay," "Marvelous Men of Mars," "General Brave," and "Super-Duper," in endless poses of power and action. Here is the modern American scene as every one of us knows it, with not a detail missing, even to the cylinder of straws and the twisted-metal drugstore chairs. But the picture is more than photographic; it is an interpretation of what a child is up to today—his odd credulity, his absorption in this new streamlined magic of the comics.

This is one of the first stories to spoof the comics and their devotees unmercifully and with hilarious results. Homer tried reading the comics but was soon fed up:

"Gosh, Freddy, these Super-Duper stories are all the same," said Homer.

"No, they're not!" said Freddy. "Sometimes the Super-Duper smashes airships and sometimes he smashes ocean liners. Then, other times he just breaks up mountains." . . .

"Shucks!" said Homer. "Let's go pitch horse shoes."

But the Super-Duper made a personal appearance in town, red tights, blue cape, and all. He was almost as terrific as his picture—all about the ELECTRIC RAY. Even Homer might have been impressed if the boys had not later encountered his Super-Duperness with his fancy automobile in the ditch. They hid and watched to see him heave it lightly back on the road again. But he did nothing of the sort. All he did was to get badly tangled up in a barbed-wire fence from which with many "ouches" the boys had to rescue him. Their old horse, Lucy, was also necessary to get his car back on the road again. The boys' disillusionment was complete.

*Homer Price* shows that Robert McCloskey is not only an artist with a rare gift for humor and interpretative details but a writer who knows today's children. Whether Homer is following a "Sensational Scent," part skunk and part robbers, or assisting with a doughnut machine that can't be stopped, or joining in a pageant celebrating the new prefabricated allotment to the town, the tales and the pictures are caustically amusing. Some of these

yarns are a shade too extravagant and too incredible, but they have an astringent humor and they give promise of better tales to come. Boys are wearing this book ragged.

Children eight to twelve like *Homer Price*, and all ages enjoy *Lentil*, which is a juvenile *Main Street*. It is chiefly big pictures of a small town, with a slight tale centered on *Lentil's* inability to sing and on his consequent devotion to playing the harmonica. Every picture is a gem. You find yourself absorbed in the details: *Lentil* practicing in the bathtub, the familiar architecture of the small town, the exalted Soldiers and Sailors Monument with the squirrels beneath looking scandalized at *Lentil's* tootling—these and innumerable other little touches keep you looking and looking again.

Robert McCloskey's stories and pictures are outstanding in this too meager field of humorous realism. At least it was meager until *Henry Huggins* came along.

**Beverly Cleary**  
**Henry Huggins**

Probably no reviewer of children's books has forgotten the excitement and fun of reading the first of Beverly Cleary's *Henry Huggins* books in 1950. Pure Americana, from supermarkets to back-yard barbecues, the stories are not only humorous but they present a picture of life in these United States that might well represent us to other peoples.

The Huggins family is an average group. The parents are sympathetic to Henry's enterprises but not overly indulgent. All the children in the stories are pursuing their own goals with the frustrations usual to children. The first book begins with Henry's determination to keep a stray dog he has acquired and named Ribsy. After Ribsy has been accepted, the next problem concerns the speedy multiplication of a pair of guppies Henry buys at a sale. By midsummer they are occupying his mother's entire supply of mason jars. This is a dilemma, in the canning season! When the original owner of Ribsy turns up and claims his dog, Henry is in a

still more serious spot. He earnestly wants to do the right thing, but he also wants Ribsy. The solution is a masterly piece of diplomacy.

In *Henry and Beezus*, our hero is trying to earn a bicycle. When he trusts Beezus (Beatrice) to pick him out a second-hand bike at an auction, she gets a fair specimen, but unfortunately it is the wrong sex! Again Henry is cheered when he wins a door prize at the supermarket opening, until he discovers it is fifty dollars' worth of work at a beauty shop! But eventually Henry gets his bicycle, and his family rejoices with him. Each book is built around a real struggle on Henry's part and some hilarious situations before a hard-won success.

Beverly Cleary's girl stories are good, too. *Ellen Tebbits'* difficulties are thoroughly appreciated by any daughter of Eve, young or old. *Beezus and Ramona* seems a bit more contrived, and Ramona's tantrums less interesting than Henry's projects. But the problem of tag-along younger brothers and sisters is a real one to many children, who sympathize with Beezus.

These books are not gems of literary style, but the characters are real boys and girls, convincingly alive. The picture of a family that must work and plan for its luxuries is a wholesome one. And the situations in the books are so enjoyable that one boy said to his teacher, who had been reading *Henry and Ribsy* aloud, "I hate to have you finish in case there won't be another Henry book."

**E. C. Spykman**  
**A Lemon and a Star**

Superior readers ten to fourteen years old will enjoy *A Lemon and a Star* (1955), a unique and genuinely funny book. It is too long for the average child, but more completely individualized, flesh-and-blood children than the four motherless Cares youngsters are not to be found in literature.

Thirteen-year-old Theodore is the pompous elder of the tribe, against whom the three younger children are united in a book-long feud. It all starts when for Jane's tenth

birthday Ted gives her a magnificent-looking package which, when opened, discloses simply—a lemon! War is on. These children live in the country, and their adventures abroad and in the nearby village are often hair-raising. And when the final revolt against Ted gets under way, complete with battle axes, that young man knows it is time to get a move on. He heads for the marsh, and the result is more mud than gore. But how can Janey, returning from her near-triumph dirty and disheveled, know that she is going to barge right in on a brand-new stepmother? In the end it is "Madam," as Janey calls her, who finally unites the tribe in affectionate amity.

Archie Binns  
Sea Pup

James Street  
Good-bye, My Lady

For most children there comes a time when they are called upon to put away childish things. *The Yearling* (p. 479) and ...and now *Miguel* (p. 423) both turn upon this necessity. Growing up means putting on responsibility, making decisions with a long-range view of life, and turning away from pleasant immediacy. Because this is hard to do, it is important that children gain some insight into this problem of coming into man's estate before they have to meet it. Fortunately, there are a number of fine books to help them.

In Archie Binns' *Sea Pup* Clint is a budding oceanographer. He lives on a remote shore of Puget Sound. When Clint finds a day-old seal pup, the family accepts the orphan with many dire warnings. But from the first Buster is so friendly and so funny that he wins the affection of the whole family, in spite of such misdemeanors as milking the neighbor's cows. Clint is sure he can control his pet by one method or another. Meanwhile, boy and seal swim together, fish, sail, explore, and hunt specimens. The climax comes when a Seattle professor urges Clint to come to the city where he can get the

proper pre-college course in science. But what about Buster? Clint's father talks it over with his son but leaves the decision to him, and Clint grows up in facing his problem.

This book has rare values as a family story, as a record of one of the most beguiling pets in literature, and as a presentation of the deep love that can develop between a boy and an animal. It also gives an unusual picture of an intellectual boy living competently in an outdoor world that is beautiful, dangerous, and thrilling. Few children will ever forget Clint's night at sea in the midst of a school of killer whales.

*Good-bye, My Lady* by James Street presents an entirely different kind of boy. Skeeter lives on the edge of a great swamp. He has never possessed anything of his own in his whole life. Yet he is rich and secure, secure because he shares Uncle Jesse's one room cabin and his love, rich because now he has a dog, and what a dog! At first, she is only a weird sound of laughter in the moonlit swamp. Then she is a small tigress fighting for her life against a cruel pack of hog dogs. And finally, she is his dog, a small, trembling creature that laughs instead of barks, licks herself clean like a cat, and sheds tears when she is scolded. Even Uncle Jesse has never seen her like.

Skeeter trains his dog painstakingly, and people come from miles around to watch her phenomenal performance in the field. But her spreading fame brings tragedy to Skeeter. She turns out to be an African Basenji, lost from a famous kennel that has been advertising for her. No one will tell on Skeeter if he decides to keep the dog, but loving his "Lady" has made Skeeter grow up. Their parting is a heartbreaker, and after the truck has gone with Lady, Uncle Jesse's old friend Cash speaks up: "Figured a little coffee might go good before y'all went back." He pours three cups, stout and black, a man's drink. Skeeter downs it, bitter though it is. After all, he *is* grown up, a man among men. Then he and Uncle Jesse head for home.

The lonely beauty of river and swamp are



in this book, and the kindness of humble people to each other. This was James Street's

last book, and it is full of his tender "reverence for life."

## Negroes

Stories about Negro children present certain unique difficulties. For one thing, many of them are written in broad dialect, and Southern dialect is as incomprehensible to Northern Negro children as it is to Northern white children. Then there is the natural sensitiveness of the Negro—a race making rapid strides toward better education and standards of living for all of its people—to stories which hold up to the Negro child only the poverty stricken and the less educated members of its group. White children may smile at Lois Lenski's vagrant families, because they have dozens of books about more sensible and successful families. They can enjoy drawings of white children which are almost caricatures, like Louis Slobodkin's *Moffats* and Robert McCloskey's *Lentil*, because they have dozens of other books in which white children are shown to be idealistically beautiful and noble. In order to laugh at ourselves wholeheartedly, we must feel secure socially and confident personally. The Negroes are trying to develop such a sense of security and self-respect in their children and so feel, quite properly, that books for and about them should foster such self-respect.

Stories about Negro children should, first of all, take the Negro seriously and present pictures either of average families or of families solving their own problems and conquering their own difficulties. The stories and the illustrations may be as humorous as need be, but they should not be caricatures. The speech should be at least average modern speech, neither heavy dialect nor illiterate language. These stories should not be concerned exclusively with race problems, and at least some of them should reflect the joyous zest for life that so many Negroes have kept in spite of the formidable problems they have faced. It does not seem too much to ask these things of the children's books for and

about a race which is advancing steadily and courageously and which has contributed richly to the music, the science, the kindness, and the infectious gaiety of our national life.

### For children five to seven

*Two Is a Team* by Lorraine and Jerrold Beim is equally popular with Negro and white children because the story it tells has universal appeal. It is a simple enough theme—two small boys discover that they can accomplish more together than singly. The fact that they are of two different races makes no difference. It is teamwork that counts. In the brief, this sounds moralistic, as indeed it is, but the story is a very natural one.

*My Dog Rinty* by Ellen Tarry and Marie Hall Ets is a still better story of a small boy who faces the heartbreaking issue of disposing of a beloved but destructive dog. This is a problem any child understands and sympathizes with. The family is appealing, and David is a winning personality. In neither of these books is "Negro" or "colored" mentioned, and the pictures are attractive presentations of likable boys.

*Tobe* by Stella Gentry Sharpe is not a story but a series of documentary photographs of a Southern Negro farm family. The simple, easily read text, together with the fine pictures, carry the reader to Tobe's home, his school, church, holidays, and work activities.

Books like these protect our youngest school children from stereotypes of Negroes. But they do more than this. They show Negro children facing problems common to all children and solving them sensibly and happily.

### For children eight to fourteen

Eva Knox Evans  
*Araminta*

*Araminta* (1935) and its sequels fulfill all the standards set up for books about Negro



Illustration by Virginia Lee Burton for *Sad Faced Boy* by Arna Bontemps, Houghton Mifflin, 1937 (original in color, book 5½ x 8)

Whether Virginia Burton is drawing the swirling confusion of city skyscrapers, elevated tracks, streetcars, and subways (p. 340), or three boys running like mad, her pictures have the rhythm of a dance.

but the kind of cadence frequently heard in children's speech. The style is simple and direct, and the stories are beautiful read aloud. Best of all, Mrs. Evans can tell a lively and often very funny story with the complete gravity that makes it funnier. The pictures of Jerome and Araminta are not caricatures but have a humor to match the stories.

**Eleanor Frances Lattimore**  
Junior, a Colored Boy of Charleston

A single book of unusual appeal is *Junior, a Colored Boy of Charleston* (1938) by Eleanor Lattimore. It is the sincere story of a little boy's efforts to help his family during the pinching times when his father is out of work. Sometimes Junior does well; sometimes he fares badly. His greatest success is singing for the old shrimp man, who gets weary chanting his wares all day. This job leads to Junior's largest earnings and helps change his family's ill fortune. Children from seven to ten will be amused by some of Junior's efforts.

**Arna Bontemps**  
*Sad-Faced Boy*

Arna Bontemps' *Sad-Faced Boy* (1937), with its amusing illustrations by Virginia Burton, is popular, particularly with children ten to fourteen years old. It tells the story of a trio of Alabama boys, Slumber, Willie, and Rags, who decide to go to Harlem. They beat their way North, explore the wonders and discover the limitations of the city. When life gets too baffling they can always make music and dance. They are a little annoyed by the bossy Daisy Bee, who shows them a trick or two with the drums and tap dancing,

children and bring to them in addition the blessed gift of humor. Children of all races enjoy these books, and they go on being favorites year after year.

In *Araminta*, the girl makes her first visit to her "gran-ma's" farm down in Alabama, where she explores the mysteries of the garden, finds out about mules, pigs, and goats, and gets acquainted with a nice boy, Jerome Anthony. Her visit is not without mishaps, but Araminta has a good time, and so do her readers. In *Jerome Anthony*, the boy comes to the city to visit his auntie. He finds the city extremely baffling until Araminta takes charge of him, and then the fun starts. The third book is *Araminta's Goat*, with Jerome and Araminta in the country once more and Goat decidedly grown up. Children from seven to nine or ten like every one of these books.

Jerome and Araminta are normal, enterprising youngsters, unconscious of race or any other social problems. They explore their environment and experiment with everything in it as all healthy, intelligent children do everywhere. The conversations are not dialect

but they profit by her tips. Ultimately they decide there is more contentment for them in Alabama; so they return as they came. The boys are an appealing trio, and Mr. Bon-temps catches the exact cadence of their speech. It is beautiful to hear and to read.

#### Books that raise problems

Should children's books about Negroes avoid all controversial issues? There will be yes and no answers to this question, and this division of opinion is reflected in differing appraisals of books like these.

**Marguerite de Angeli**

*Bright April*

This attractive book has the virtue of showing a cultured Negro family. They live in a beautiful, well-kept house. They are prosperous, intelligent, and handsome. Little April, the youngest child, is a heart-stealer. But each episode in the book involves a racial issue. There are no moments of family fun minus a problem. The family meets each difficulty courageously and well, and for little April there is a happy solution to her humiliations. But is life, even for Negroes, one continuous series of problems?

**Mabel Leigh Hunt**

*Ladycake Farm*

*Ladycake Farm* (1952) is a better story, with well-drawn characters and a theme that turns upon family achievement. But so serious are the issues involved that the book has been praised and attacked by both Negro and white reviewers. It concerns a family of Negroes who have accumulated sufficient funds to buy a farm. The unique process of moving their house with everything in it makes an entertaining beginning. The farm more than fulfills their dreams until they find a sign by a lovely brook, "Niggers unwelcome. Keep out." The children never go near that beautiful stream again. Fortunately, the Freed's hard work and courage win them a respected place in the community, and eventually the hateful sign comes down. The mother is an unfor-

gettable character in this story, but some Negroes have objected to the father's advice to smile in the face of insults. Certainly this is no book to be used without careful reading and a full realization of the seriousness of the issues involved.

**Jesse Jackson**

*Call Me Charley*

Jesse Jackson, a Negro writer, has given a full and moving account of the kind of discriminations a boy of his race encounters. In *Call Me Charley*, the young Negro, the only one in the neighborhood, is not welcome in the school but is tolerated. He has some bitter disappointments but gradually wins the respect and friendship of some of the boys. It is a touching story made more poignant by Charley's quiet, patient acceptance of his lot. When his friends finally sense his heartbroken disappointment over his exclusion from the school play, they do something about it. Charley is in the play and happy for the present. The author has too realistic an approach to suggest a complete solution, but he tells a good story of a brave, likable boy in a difficult world.

**John R. Tunis**

*All-American*

Boys will tell you that John Tunis knows his sports; parents will tell you he knows his adolescent boys; teachers will add, "and our American schools, too." He writes in the slangy vernacular of the modern boy, and he tells an exciting story. And in the process he does some unobtrusive propagandizing for the workings of democracy. In *All-American*, Ronny, a private-school boy, transfers to a public high school and plays football with the usual mixed racial groups (p. 491). He comes to value each boy for his worth and becomes aware of the special difficulties of the one Negro player. How Ronny helps solve the problem of discrimination is courageous and realistic. In the *Horn Book* for May 1946, Howard Pease says of this book, "Its story rings and echoes in our minds for weeks

and months afterwards. I myself found *All-American* one of the most exciting junior novels I have ever read. To me it remains a milestone in juvenile book publication."

There are certain qualities still lacking in children's books about Negroes. There is, for example, little suggestion of the deep religious faith that permeates many Negro homes. Nor is there an adequate picture of their sense of fun and the gaiety of their family and com-

## American Indians

Indian stories for young people and children have undergone an interesting evolution. They began with such romantically idealized stories as James Fenimore Cooper's *Last of the Mohicans*, dear to the boys of an earlier generation. Then came Early Settler stories which emphasized the scalping, warpath Indian. He was the personification of all that was bloody and terrible, with an eye on scalps and a tomahawk ready for all white people, especially women and children. *The Matchlock Gun* (p. 437) is this type of story. In none of them was there any hint that the Indian might have some justification for harrying the white settlers. No mention is made of the period when treaty after treaty was broken with the Indians and they were driven ruthlessly off their land farther and farther west to poorer and poorer lands. Only recently in either adult or juvenile literature has there been any attempt to present the Indian living his own life with his own tribal customs, religion, and code of behavior. Now, having ignored the treaty-breaking past, writers are also turning their backs upon the bloody massacres of the Indians.

The new books for children are showing the modern Indian of the reservation or the farm, coping with many difficulties, holding his self-respect and his dignity. The books do not deal with Indians in general but with specific tribes. Characteristic dwelling places, foods, religious beliefs and practices, and ways of making a livelihood vary with each tribe; and they are presented authentically. Re-

munity celebrations. These qualities have carried many Negroes far and help to account for their special success in the arts. Their talented boys and girls have struggled against unusual odds to achieve recognition in the entertainment field. *Steppin and Family* by Hope Newell was built around this theme. It is a pity that this book has been allowed to go out of print, because it was the kind of realistic success story that is greatly needed.

cently, some books have included the Indians' prejudices against the white men. The Indians described in these stories are very different from the James Fenimore Cooper Indians or the scalping, war-whooping Indians. There is a sincere attempt to interpret honestly and sympathetically the present-day problems of these native Americans.

### M. O'Moran

#### Trail of the Little Paiute

Books that give children authentic pictures of how Indians in the past lived, thought, and felt are important in building a background for understanding Indians today. One of these is *Trail of the Little Paiute* (1952), which shows the struggle for survival after white men invade the arid hunting grounds of the Paiute Indians. When famine comes, the law of the tribe is that the old ones must leave the camp and walk out into the wilderness alone, which of course means death. But the motherless boy, Inyo, when he finds his grandmother is the first to be sent away, rebels at the tribal law and follows his grandmother. The story of their hardships and adventures crossing mountains and desert is almost incredible. Inyo becomes an important go-between for his tribe and the white men. This story is remarkable for its vivid characterizations of individual Indians, especially the old grandmother and the Paiute chief. It is also an important record of the Paiute's courageous but hopeless last stand against the encroaching white men.

## Eloise Jarvis McGraw

### Moccasin Trail

This well-written and absorbing story (1952) marks the end of the era of mountain men and the beginning of settlements and farms in the Far West. It is also the story of a white boy, rescued and raised by Crow Indians until he thinks and feels completely Indian. Or so he believes, until one day the braves return to camp with some scalps, and among them is one with blond hair—the color of his mother's. In a flash Jim knows he is not Indian and he must go back to his own family. But readjusting to settled life is harder than Jim anticipated. Jim helps his family, but he hates their continual industry and orderly ways. He knows too that his wild restlessness, his long braids with his coup feather, are deeply offensive to his young sister. Only to his little brother Daniel is Jim a hero, but the boy's worshipful admiration and imitation which are balm to Jim are sources of anxiety to Sally. Once, in Jim's absence, young Daniel runs away to the Indians. Then Jim knows that Daniel must be saved and he himself must turn his back forever on the Moccasin Trail. This story of a personal conflict is important because through Jim's troubled thinking the author shows both the attractions and virtues of Indian life and its limitations and inevitable doom.

## Grace and Carl Moon

### Chi-Weé

Grace Moon was one of the first to write authentic stories of Indian children living their own lives, enjoying their own fun, and solving their own problems. *Chi-Weé* (1925) is about Pueblo children whose world is the mesa, the desert, and the canyon. Exploring a cave, the children come upon strange relics of their tribal past which bear significant relationship to their arts and customs of the present. Meanwhile, through the everyday work and pranks of the two children and through their family life, the reader comes to know and admire these desert Indians. Mrs. Moon has written other good Indian stories,

but they are now out of print. Her husband, Carl Moon, not only illustrates her books but has himself written stories of these people. The Moons lived among them for years and have an affectionate regard for the Pueblos.

## Laura Armer

### Waterless Mountain

Very different from the objective stories of Mrs. Moon are Laura Armer's books about the Navaho Indians, written for children twelve to fifteen years old. The hero of her Newbery winner, *Waterless Mountain* (1931), Younger Brother, whose secret name is Dawn Boy, knows that he is going to be a medicine man when he grows up, and the story tells much about his training in the mysticism of the Navaho religion. It is a beautifully written story but decidedly difficult for the average child to understand and share. To be sure, teachers who love this book can have a whole roomful of young Navaho mystics completely in sympathy with Younger Brother, but most children must be helped to an enjoyment of this unusual story. The everyday life of the tribe emerges clearly, and there is one exciting adventure when the boys catch horse thieves and reclaim a beloved pony. Even with this cheerful interlude, the story is far from simple.

## Mary and Conrad Buff

### Dancing Cloud

Mary and Conrad Buff also lived among the Indians, and *Dancing Cloud* (1937) is their record of the Navahos in story and pictures. The pictures are strong in color and powerful in line and show the people and the country in many moods. During gray, dark winter days children can look at these desert pictures and bask vicariously in that burning, relentless sun. Its sharp blue shadows cut jagged lines on the face of the mountains and on the strong, craggy faces of the people; and when the sun is withdrawn, the storms are equally fierce and relentless. The story is not so memorable as the pictures. Each chapter is a separate episode dealing with the ac-

tivities of these people and their children—weaving, herding and shearing sheep, making jewelry, preparing food.

*Magic Maize* (1953) by this talented husband-and-wife team is about Guatemalan Indians, but their problems are much like those faced by some of the remote tribes in this country. The characters in this story are more fully realized than those in *Dancing Cloud*. And again Mr. Buff has captured the calm strength of the Indians and the glowing colors of their country.

*Hah-Nee* goes back in time to explain why the great Pueblo cities of the Southwest were abandoned. Hah-Nee does not quite emerge as a flesh-and-blood boy, but is rather a name to carry the story. The effect of long-continued drouth will be understood by modern desert dwellers. To other children the book will supply a colorful and exciting background for the enigma of those vast, empty Pueblo cities that loom so impressively in the Far West.

**Ann Nolan Clark**

*In My Mother's House*  
*Secret of the Andes*

These two books represent something of Mrs. Clark's range of experience with primitive peoples and her ability to understand and interpret their ways of life so that modern children respect them. She was at one time a teacher of Southwestern Indian children and has been a supervisor of Indian Schools. She has traveled under the Inter-American Educational Foundation in various countries of Latin America training native teachers, and her writing reflects her love for these peoples. *Secret of the Andes* (1952), a Newbery Medal winner, is the story of a dedicated Peruvian Indian boy, the last of a royal line. *Santiago* is about a Guatemalan youth, raised in a Spanish home but determined to find his place in the world as an Indian. Both of these perceptive stories are for children eleven to fourteen.

For younger children Ann Nolan Clark has written three books that give authentic pictures of the life and ideals of our desert

Indians. *In My Mother's House* (1941) is written as if a Tewa child were speaking simply and beautifully of the small world he knows and holds dear. The cadenced prose of the text is matched by the rhythmic beauty of the illustrations. The last page summarizes the content of the book:

The pueblo,  
The people,  
And fire,  
And fields,  
And water,  
And land,  
And animals—  
I string them together  
Like beads.

They make a chain,  
A strong chain,  
To hold me close  
To home,  
Where I live  
In my Mother's house.

*Little Navajo Bluebird* tells the dramatic story of a Navaho child who loves her home, her family, and the old ways of life. She sees her brother and sister changed by the white man's school, and she hates the idea that she will ever have to go there and lose the old ways so dear to her. Through the sympathy and wisdom of her uncle's young wife, she comes to see that the Red Man's Trail and the White Man's Trail may meet. She knows that when her time comes to go to the white man's school she will go gladly. Children nine to eleven enjoy little Doli and leave her with a better understanding of the Indian's problems of adjustment.

*Blue Canyon Horse* is about the Havasu Indians, who, with neither roads nor wagons, must depend on horses in their canyon home. The book begins with the flight of a young mare to the high mesa above the canyon, where the wild horses live. All winter the boy grieves for his lost horse, but never loses hope that she will return. And sure enough, in the spring she comes back with her colt to the friendship of her master. No outline can give a fair picture of the beauty and simplicity of

this story, with the little mare running wild and free and the interludes of the boy's hurt and longing, his dream "misted, unreal, unfinished, but in it flickers a spark of hope."

## Regional and religious minorities

No other country in the world shelters the variety of peoples to be found in these United States of America. Negroes and Indians are only two examples. We have such regional groups as the mountaineers and the Cajuns, and the migrant groups that follow the crops—picking cotton or beans or strawberries or oranges. Then there are the close-knit communities of immigrants and their descendants making a little Italy or Hungary or Sweden within a larger community. And this still does not exhaust the varieties of groups in the United States; there are other groups representing all the major and innumerable minor religious sects—Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, Amish, Quaker, Mormon, and many more.

Since all of these diverse peoples have contributed richly to our national life, it is important that children should meet them vicariously in books in order that they may meet them in person sympathetically and with respect. Whether the story is about the family of a migrant cotton picker, a Pennsylvania-Dutch farmer, a mountaineer, or a Jewish storekeeper, the book should be first of all a good story, not a sociological tract for children. And the young hero or heroine of the story should be so appealing and understandable that young readers will identify themselves with him in his ups and downs with wholehearted sympathy.

Whether she writes for the oldest or the youngest children, Mrs. Clark writes with a sense of the inner life and ideals of a people. Her cadenced prose is beautiful and unique.

### Marguerite de Angeli *Henner's Lydia*

Mrs. de Angeli was one of the pioneers in relating stories about the minority groups around her home in Philadelphia. Her stories are slight, but the warm pictures she paints, both with colors and words, of Amish, Quaker, and Pennsylvania-Dutch children are important. *Henner's Lydia*, *Skippack School*, *Yonie Wondernose*, and *Thee, Hannah!* contribute to youngsters' feeling that these people are even as you and I, but perhaps a bit more interesting.

Yonie with his wondering is the favorite, especially when, like the hero of the folk tale, his wondering pays off and he proves his courage as well. Particularly appealing, too, is little Quaker Hannah, who despises her Quaker garb until she finds herself chosen, because of it, to serve a great cause. This book goes back in time to the Civil War.

*Up the Hill* is about a modern Polish colony in one of our large cities. We know their food, their fetes, their dances, their old-

Illustration from Marguerite de Angeli's *Up the Hill*, Doubleday, Doran, 1942 (original in color, book 8 x 8¼)

Even without the soft, clear colors, this picture is lovely to look at. It is from Marguerite de Angeli's story of a modern Polish colony.



*Done in blues and browns, these crayon sketches of Ellis Credle's suggest the Southern mountains and the sturdy people who live there.*

when she knows she must attend a public school. But she makes friends and is surprised to find that her very best friend, she of the glorious pink dress, actually admires Esther's plain clothes. There is conflict for Esther, too. She is worried because her brother has run away from the plain ways. Was it because of what he learned in school? The pink dress presents a minor but very real problem also. How these conflicts are resolved makes a good story which earned the Child Study Award for a significant and well-told tale.

### All-of-a-Kind Family

Of first importance are her illustrations. These are beautiful in color with springtime freshness and innocence. To be sure, her children—whatever their sex, nationality, or disposition—have always the same little heart-shaped faces and wistful beauty, but they have also a skipping gaiety which is the very essence of all childhood. Grace, lightness, and pure, clear colors give her illustrations an eye-filling loveliness. Whether it is the warm, pinkish-red brick of old Philadelphia houses, or a blue March sky with puddles underfoot, or white ducks no whiter than the clouds, or the quiet peace of Quaker faces in a Sabbath meeting, Marguerite de Angeli's pictures reveal a gentle beauty.

*Plain Girl* is another delightful story about a Pennsylvania minority group. Ten-year-old Amish Esther is both worried and pleased

One of the large religious groups in this country is, of course, Jewish. And two books that are models of what authors should strive for in presenting such groups to children are Sydney Taylor's *All-of-a-Kind Family* (1951) and *More All-of-a-Kind Family*. The fact that the children are all girls accounts for the titles, although to Papa's great delight a boy arrives eventually.

The family lives on New York's lower East Side in a Jewish neighborhood, but the adventures of the girls are such as might happen to any city children anywhere. The first book opens with the despair of the five over the loss of a library book. How can they ever face the library lady? Will they be barred from getting more books? This problem has a happy ending, and the other incidents are the kind that might happen in any family. The difference lies in the fact that their warm home life is deeply rooted in Jewish religious customs. Hard-working Papa and pretty, capable Mama keep all the fasts and feasts of the Jewish year with deep reverence and thanksgiving. These, and the family gaiety, together with Mama's mouth-watering foods,



Illustration by Ruth Carroll for *Beanie* by Ruth and Latrobe Carroll, Oxford, 1953 (book 8 x 10)

*"A-hunting we will go" is the obvious intent of this young man and his pup. To her pictures of woodlands and steep mountainsides the artist gives a sense of mystery and peace.*

make every reader wish he might be a part of the family group. A pleasanter emissary for Jewish culture, religious piety, and family love than these two entertaining and heart-warming books could hardly be found.

### Ellis Credle

#### Down Down the Mountain

Reading about Southern mountaineers in the books of Ellis Credle, the two Carrolls, Jesse Stuart, May Justus, and Charlie May Simon gives the city child some of the insight a camp experience does. If mountaineer children have greens for dinner, it is because they have helped plant them, tend them, pick, wash, and cook them. If they want new shoes or a present for granny, they must earn the money. If a little girl has a polka-dot dress, it is because her clever granny knows how to splatter dash it with a daub stick. If she has a doll, it is made of corn shucks, and a "sight pretty" too. If life grows dull, the mountain child can always dream over the "wish book," the mail-order catalog, or listen to ballads sung by granny or a neighbor. He may even dream of going "far beyant," which is much farther than the far side of the mountains. Some of the children's adventures are scary, but their resourcefulness sees them through.

A favorite is Ellis Credle's *Down Down the Mountain*, a story about two Southern mountaineer children, Hetty and Hank, who yearn to possess a pair of squeaky shoes. They must earn them, but how? Their mountain is so steep that pumpkins might roll right off the side; so they plant turnips, which flourish. But on the way to town to exchange their crop for shoes, the children find hungry people who seem to have more need for their turnips than they themselves have for shoes. By the time Hetty and Hank finally reach the



town they have given away all their turnips except one, their biggest one to be sure, but still only one. Obviously they can't have shoes. Then the fair with prizes for the finest specimens unexpectedly provides shoes for Hetty and Hank. Their turnip of turnips wins a prize! They get the most elegantly squeaky shoes in town and enjoy a triumphant return home, with shoes and presents.

These mountaineer children are resourceful, enterprising youngsters. They expect to earn what they get and do their own dicker-ing into the bargain. They take disappointments cheerfully and receive good fortune with delighted amazement. There are action, energy, good humor, and a nice generosity about these children which make them likable but never priggish. The author's vigorous crayon sketches in blues and browns have action and humor.

Ruth and Latrobe Carroll  
Beanie

The Carrolls have continued their annals of the Tatum family through three lively stories

glorified by magnificent sketches of the great Smoky Mountains. The hero is young Beanie. The complications stem from his frisky pup, Tough Enough, and the adventures include an encounter with a bear, a spring fresher, and sundry other unexpected excitements. There is an unobtrusive emphasis on character. Everyone must do his share of work. Mother is loving and competent, and she expects competence of her children. Father is independent, a hard worker, and patient and understanding. Young Beanie must use his head to survive. It takes courage to face a bear, but still more to tell father his dire suspicions of his pet's misdemeanors. Back of everything are the love of the Tatum for each other and the fun and solidarity of the Tatum tribe. These are fine family stories for children six to nine.

**Jesse Stuart**  
The Beatnest Boy

Jesse Stuart, a mountain man, poet, and author of that charming autobiography, *The Thread That Runs So True*, is not yet at ease in the juvenile field, but his books are improving. *The Beatnest Boy* (1953) was somewhat disjointed, but there is a delightful episode about a Christmas gift. Granny and the boy are well worth knowing. *Penny's Worth of Character* shows that the wages of cheating are a bad conscience and the need to make amends—too obviously moralistic to be much of a story. The story element in *Red Mule*—mule versus tractor—is livelier and more successful. Mr. Stuart's plots are too contrived to be first-rate, but he has so deep a love for the people of the country that they are always convincing. His books are good pictures of mountain folk for children nine to twelve.

**May Justus**  
Here Comes Mary Ellen

May Justus' books are for children seven to ten. *Here Comes Mary Ellen* is typical of them all and a favorite. Granny is a delightful

character, and so is Step Along the peddler, but little Mary Ellen's activities are the center of the tales. The stories give a good all-around picture of life in the Tennessee mountains.

**Charlie May Simon**  
Lost Corner

Charlie May Simon's books, on the whole, appeal to children ten to twelve years old. *Lost Corner*, a typical story, is about Ozark mountain life and the Jackson family with the three children, Jeb, Melissa, and Chris—a contented, busy group. How Melissa gets lost in the mountains with her baby brother Chris and is befriended by an old man is the central episode in the story. The resourcefulness of the mountain children and the hospitable kindness of the people to each other are outstanding in these books.

**Lois Lenski**  
Strawberry Girl

In 1940 *Blue Willow*, a tender and beautifully written book by Doris Gates appeared and was a runner-up for the Newbery Medal. It was a story of migratory farm workers and their camps. It centered on ten-year-old Janey's longing for a permanent home where her family would be a settled part of a settled community. Then in 1946 when the Newbery Medal was given to Lois Lenski's *Strawberry Girl*, it called attention to a unique series of books about regional groups of many kinds, all over this country.

Lois Lenski began her series with *Bayou Suzette*, a story about the French-speaking people in the bayou section of Louisiana. After *Strawberry Girl* of Florida came *Blue Ridge Billy* about the North Carolina mountaineer group and *Judy's Journey*, which followed the crop-pickers from California to Florida and back to New Jersey. There have been more of these books in succeeding years. *Strawberry Girl* is still one of the best, with *Boom Town Boy* and *Cotton in My Sack* equally strong stories about highly individual characters and places. Other writers have carried on this idea of the regional story, but no

one has approached the task with greater sincerity and sense of dedication than Lois Lenski.

"Seeing Others As Ourselves" was the title of her acceptance paper for the Newbery Medal, and it is her approach to each of these books. She moves into a community literally and spiritually. Sketching outdoors is the magnet which draws and enchants the children as they watch a scene or people developing on her paper. The children in turn pave the way for her informal visits with the grown-ups in markets, on stoops and porches, or in kitchens and yards. From Florida to Texas, people tell about her warmth and kindness. "I shall recollect you...in all pleasantness..." one old man told her. And many have thought it.

*Strawberry Girl* (1945) is typical of these books at their best. It is the story of Birdie Boyer's family, newly moved to Florida's backwoods for the purpose of raising small crops of "sweet 'taters," strawberries, oranges, and the like. Birdie has courage and spunk, and the Boyers are a close-knit, competent family. They take their ups and downs philosophically, and the Slaters next door are the worst pests they encounter. Pa Slater drinks and is deliberately and maliciously mean. Ma Slater is slatternly, and the children are unkempt and rough. But Shoestring Slater, under Birdie's relentless guidance, begins to see the light. In the end, a revival meeting reforms Pa, at least temporarily, and the Slaters, especially Shoestring, taste the sweetness of group acceptance and even approval. Meanwhile, the Boyers are on their way to a modest success.

This is grimmer realism than anything since *Tom Sawyer*, and it continues in the other books. In *Cotton in My Sack* the mother can't cook or keep her house or keep her children clean. Everyone in the family, except the baby, toils endlessly picking cotton, only to indulge in a weekly orgy of aimless spending. So in *Boom Town Boy*, Orvie's family when it strikes oil goes on a spending spree that is silly and purposeless. Only

Gramp saves them from demoralizing idleness. Yet these books have a wry humor about them, and children like the stories.

What is it that lifts these uneducated, close-to-vagrant families above the squalor in which they live? It is partly their courage, but chiefly the fierce family pride and love that binds them together through thick and thin. Joanda would not touch the school lunches until Ma told her to, because they seemed to be a reflection on Ma's cooking, as indeed they could hardly help but be. Orvie is ashamed of his family but loyal to them and sure Gramp will pull them through. This abiding love for each other and sense of the solidarity of the family group gives warmth to what might otherwise be a too somber realism.

There are dangers in such a series of books. They might easily turn into obvious propaganda and stereotypes. The values of this series are to be found in their objective realism and compassion. Young members of under-privileged families meet their own kind in these regional stories of Lois Lenski's. And they take heart, because always the ups and downs of these hard-pressed people yield a ray of hope. Things are, or give promise of becoming, better. As for the well-cared-for children of suburbia, these books give them a picture of family love and loyalty that makes these families worthy of respect.

### Joseph Krumgold

...and now Miguel

Another Newbery award book which interprets with rare insight a particular regional group of people is Joseph Krumgold's...and now *Miguel*. It is the story of twelve-year-old Miguel, descendant of generations of Spanish shepherders, who settled in New Mexico in the shadows of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Miguel knows sheep from the first birth cry at lambing time to the last shearing, and he has the deep insight into their ways and weaknesses that has always distinguished the men of his family. Miguel's problem is to persuade his father to accept him as a man,

ready for the same responsibilities his adored older brother Gabriel enjoys. After many attempts to prove his reliability, Miguel carries his heart's desire to San Ysidro in prayer. His prayer is answered with astonishing suddenness. Miguel is to go with the sheep and the men to the mountain pastures for the summer, but only because Gabriel has been drafted. Grief-stricken by what he believes his prayer has wrought, Miguel returns to San Ysidro for reconsideration. There follows a discussion between Miguel and Gabriel, concerning how people should or should not pray, that is unique in children's books.

This remarkable book began as a documentary film, and is still available in that form. But the story of a region, a particular kind of work, a family, and a boy's coming of age is all told with such poetic insight, humor, and tenderness that the book will bear many readings.

#### Other minorities

Clara Ingram Judson has written a splendid series of books called *They Came from Sweden*, *They Came from Scotland*, and so on. These follow the course of sturdy immigrants from the Old World to these shores, and show their difficulties and adjustments to life here.

In *Nino Valenti Angelo*, a master of decorative design, has given children a delightful picture of his own childhood in Italy; in later books he has followed the family adventures in this country. *Paradise Valley* tells about families who because of unemployment or seasonal work are forced to live in temporary homes, shantytowns, or camps. *The Bells of Bleeker Street* is the amusing story of boys in the "Little Italy" of a big city, with a background of Italian customs centering in the neighborhood church.

To our knowledge of a little known religious group, Virginia Sorenson has contributed a substantial novel called *The House Next Door*. Teen-agers will find this story of the Utah Mormons, in the crucial period of transition from polygamy to its abolition, a

powerful one. The characters are vividly alive, and their problems sympathetically dealt with.

Stories about our so-called "aliens," a sad word for the newcomers to our shores, are beginning to multiply. The Literature Committee of the Association for Childhood Education edited an excellent anthology of such stories, including tales about most of our racial and religious minorities. *Told under the Stars and Stripes* is a valuable introduction to the unhappy miscarriages of our democracy and to the children's solutions of some of these problems—democracy in action.

#### Criteria for stories about minority groups

So the picture grows. Here are groups, set apart by race, geography, special work, or religion, differing widely in beliefs and customs but living side by side in comparative amity. Through this very diversity all are contributing to the richness of our national life.

Because books about minority groups are coming thick and fast, how shall we appraise them? The books cited in this chapter may well serve as criteria for evaluation.

They are all primarily good stories with strong child appeal, substantial themes, and good plots. They are also alive with unique and memorable characters. Lois Lenski's people might easily slip into stereotypes of the poor or depressed. Instead they are vividly and often cantankerously alive. In the story of Miguel even the minor characters are remembered—the wise and wonderful old Padre de Chavez and the irrepressible Faustina with her "Okeydokee" one week and "Galgogalgolena" the next. Nor in any of these books is there any patronizing attitude toward the "poor aliens" or "poor fruit pickers" or the Mormon or Jewish child. Instead, these diverse people are presented with warmth and understanding, and their tragedies, struggles, anxieties, and brief moments of triumph or fun are much like everyone's. If, within the framework of lively, well-written stories, young readers can discover that in reality people are more alike than different,

more akin to each other than alien, then these are good books. They do not have to preach democracy. They are showing it in action—

## Mystery tales

A current classification of children's books which cuts across all groups of realistic fiction in all countries and times is the mystery story. The mystery tale is certainly a striking example of the way in which children's books parallel predominant trends in adult reading interests. With mothers, fathers, and even grandparents all devoted to the "Whodunit" school of writing, it is not surprising to find a seven-year-old marching into the children's room of a great library and demanding a good mystery story.<sup>1</sup> In libraries today, older children can find racks upon racks of juvenile mysteries which include, along with mediocre ones, some fine books by authors whose names are a guarantee of wholesome, well-written fiction.

The extreme popularity of the mystery tale at present is undoubtedly a current fad as far as children are concerned, artificially stimulated by adult emphasis. Indeed, librarians say that the juvenile demand for a "mystery" is beginning to diminish even now. An element of mystery has always been a source of interest in a story and always will be. But when innumerable books are written merely for the sake of the mystery, the pattern and mood of such tales are liable to become tiresomely repetitious and the stories are likely to be mere trash. This is happening in adult mysteries today and in juveniles as well. At their worst, such books are marked by preposterous plots, details left unaccounted for, too many episodes, violence piled upon violence, typed characters, and, finally, poor style.

The virtues of good mystery tales for children are numerous, but first among these is the atmosphere of excitement and suspense

many different kinds of peoples living peaceably and happily side by side, all good citizens of the United States.

which serves as the most tempting of all baits for nonreaders. Comic-strip-addicted and movie-fed children demand a highly spiced book fare if they are going to read at all, and these mystery tales are usually adventure stories with plenty of breath-taking action to keep young thrill-seekers absorbed. Another useful feature of such stories is that they help establish a much needed reading skill—rapid silent reading. Children unconsciously speed up their usual reading rate under the stimulus of an agreeable suspense. They will cover pages of a mystery tale at breakneck speed in their desire to find the answers and solve the mystery. This rapid rate of silent reading, together with a little skipping or skimming on the way, is a useful habit for fiction readers to establish—the younger the better.

Finally, if children can be supplied with mystery stories which are also well written and not too difficult for them to read, unbookish children can be persuaded to read a better type of literature than they might otherwise attempt. A superb example of good adventure literature is Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*. This is for the fourteen-year-old and is not easy to read. But younger children sometimes finish it, lured on by its superior thrills and its picturesque characters. The virtues of this story are worth noting as standards for what a good mystery story can be.

### Robert Louis Stevenson *Treasure Island*

*Treasure Island* is the tale of some guileless gentlefolk who fall into the hands of a villainous pirate crew headed by an ingratiating leader, Long John Silver. They sail on the *Hispaniola* to look for buried treasure, the exact location of which is on a map the boy Jim Hawkins gets possession of and turns

<sup>1</sup>Reported by Miss Margaret Clark, head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library.

over to the doctor for safekeeping. Jim overhears the pirates plotting with Silver to get the map, kill off the men they are serving, and take the treasure and the ship. Jim warns his friends, and once on the island the fight is on—captain, doctor, squire, Jim, and a few decent members of the crew versus Long John Silver and the pirates. It is a battle of wit and strategy as well as of violence, for the one-legged Silver with his parrot Captain Flint riding on his shoulder is a formidable foe—cool, brainy, and ruthless. How the captain, the squire, the doctor, and Jim finally win the battle, capture the treasure, and set sail once more is surprising enough. But to find the redoubtable Silver amiably lined up on the side of the victors is a curiously natural and satisfying conclusion.

The virtues of this absorbing story are greater than the mere solution of the treasure mystery or the suspense of the many parts of a wholly thrilling tale. Here is masterly characterization. The leading persons in the story are convincing composites of strength and weakness, bravery and wickedness. Jim Hawkins is a real boy, full of curiosities, good intentions, and a youthful but often mistaken confidence in his own abilities. The well-intentioned squire gets them all into their scrape in the first place by his chatty indiscretions. The doctor and the captain are the brains of the expedition, each forthright and competent in his own way. Long John Silver, hobbling about on his wooden leg and crutch as agilely as a monkey, is as fascinating a villain as ever dominated a tale. Silver is intelligent, clever, cruel, treacherous, and impatient with the stupid, greedy wretches he commands, and he always has his eye on the best course for John Silver.

There is an adroit contrast in moral codes in this assembly of decent folk and rogues. Silver and his band are ever ready to betray or kill each other. Silver is redeemed from being completely despicable by his courage and his ebullient spirits. The doctor and the captain exemplify the virtues of gentlemen. The doctor will give medical aid even to the

enemy but will give no quarter to the wretches personally. The captain organizes and disciplines his handful of men, not only for battle but for morale between times. It is the captain who rebukes Jim gravely for the desertion of his post to carry out one of his own reckless enterprises. And it is the squire who roundly denounces the turncoat Silver when the latter joins the very company he had been fighting:

*"John Silver," he said, "you're a prodigious villain and impostor—a monstrous impostor, sir. I am told I am not to prosecute you. Well, then, I will not. But the dead men, sir, hang about your neck like millstones."*

From then on, no member of the group treats Silver as anything but the villain he is, and his escape is welcomed by them all as good riddance of a man who, having in him the element of greatness, was nevertheless a traitorous brigand.

This book, with its gallery of finely drawn characters and a narrative that surpasses any other pirate or buried treasure story ever composed, has the additional virtue of good writing. The characters talk and the reader is spellbound. A scene is described and the reader is there:

*... for I had heard in the silent, frosty air, a sound that brought my heart into my mouth—the tap-tapping of the blind man's stick upon the frozen road. It drew nearer and nearer, while we sat holding our breath. Then it struck sharp on the inn door, and then we could hear the handle being turned. . . .*

Descriptions, action, characterization, dialogue—these carry the reader completely out of his own world with the sweep and vigor of a well-told tale.

If stories of this caliber could be found, no one would have any complaint against mystery tales. However, it is unfortunate if a child limits his reading to mystery stories—or to any other type of reading, for that matter. Youth should be the time for sampling many types. Happily, although there is only one *Treasure Island*, many good mystery and ad-

venture stories have been written for younger and less skilled readers. Most of these are not mystery stories in the adult sense of the word. Rather, the author has introduced an incidental vein of mystery with exciting results. The children call them mystery stories, and teachers and librarians don't quarrel with them about classifications but are thankful for the combination of good writing, exciting plots, and wholesome stories.

While most of these books are for the teen age with a fair number for the ten- to twelve-year-olds, there are a few that will probably satisfy readers under ten.

**Florence and Howard Everson**  
*The Secret Cave*

A rather mild mystery but an exceedingly good story is *The Secret Cave* by Florence and Howard Everson. Sammy Andy discovers a cave, a real one, too, which can be visited at South Salem. Instead of telling the grown-ups about it, Sammy Andy and his friend decide to explore it for themselves with the help of a precious birthday gift, a flashlight. How they lose the flashlight and are in turn lost in the inky blackness of their cave is scary enough to satisfy the most avid young devotee of chills and thrills.

**Helen F. Orton**  
*The Treasure in the Little Trunk*  
*The Secret of the Rosewood Box*

Helen F. Orton often introduces a mild element of mystery into her historical tales. In *The Treasure in the Little Trunk* (1932) there is interest in the lost string of gold beads. *The Secret of the Rosewood Box* is more fully centered on the lost hat box, under the lining of which Grandmother had placed something precious. Where the box went and what Grandmother put in it motivate much of the action of this pioneer story. Ten-year-old Charlie King finds the box at last. Since these two books were published, Helen Orton has written many more mysteries in a similar pattern.

**Elizabeth Lansing**  
*Deer Mountain Hideaway*

Fred and Hank, the young heroes of *Deer Mountain Hideaway* (1953) and *Deer River Raft*, do not set out to be detectives. They just blunder into mysteries so sinister that their expert help is obviously needed. Their only handicap is Fred's snooping little sister Janey, who, in spite of the limitations of her age and sex, has a maddening way of landing in the thick of things. In the first book, the boys are building a hut on Deer Mountain when they stumble on some desperate deer poachers. The boys' sleuthing involves several grave mistakes and considerable danger. But the hair-raising climax is a triumph for the boys, tempered only by the fact that the ever-active Janey reaches the scene of action first.

*Deer River Raft* is an exciting tale of cattle rustlers, and again the solution of the mystery turns upon the irrepressible Janey, who astonishes even the boys. These are excellent outdoor stories as well as mysteries. The characters are very much live individuals, and although Fred and Hank have the major rôles, Janey's casual successes will tickle the girls. These books are good reading for children eight to ten and a boon to slow readers of twelve.

Astrid Lindgren's *Bill Bergson* stories are similar to Miss Lansing's in plot construction but Swedish in background. For this reason they are not as easily read and understood, although they are exciting and amusing stories.

**Belle Dorman Rugh**  
*Crystal Mountain*

*Crystal Mountain* (1955) is a beautiful story about life in another land, for only slightly older children. This book about four American boys and one English girl living in Lebanon was a Newbery runner-up. The boys speak Arabic, are friendly with the Lebanese, and live an active life exploring the mountain. Boadie, the English child, and her unique governess join but do not handicap the boys.

How the children slowly uncover the mystery of an oddly built hut up in the rocks involves a lot of English, American, and Lebanese people. The story ends with the unfolding of a tender and tragic tale and the deepening friendship of all these different people. Unique characters, dialogue that is outstanding in its lively naturalness, and glimpses of the wild beauty of the country make this a distinguished book.

**Keith Robertson**

*Three Stuffed Owls*

Keith Robertson's mysteries for older children and young people are not only well written, but humorous and exciting, too. *Three Stuffed Owls* (1954) begins with the two youthful detectives of the "Carson Street Detective Agency" yawning idly as they wait in their "office" over the garage for business to begin. Ginny, their first client, wants Swede and Neil to find her brother's bicycle. When the boys go to work on the case, they get into more than they bargained for. There is a mysterious taxidermist and his assistant, who is conspicuously short of a finger. There is a barn with a dungeon-like pit, a stuffed owl that hoots horrifically, and sundry other birds, stuffed and otherwise. As the action gains momentum the suspense increases, and the case will keep young readers guessing to the end.

An earlier book, *The Mystery of Burnt Hill*, is also a good yarn, involving carrier pigeons, invisible ink, and a sure-enough gunfight at the end.

*Ice to India* (1955) is the best of Mr. Robertson's mysteries, with the most colorful and villainous villain since Long John Silver. When Captain John Mason is struck down by some cargo on the eve of sailing, there is plenty of reason to believe it is not an accident. His father comes out of retirement to replace him and adds young Nathaniel Mason to the crew, though Nat is only a boy. Their cargo is a desperate speculation—ice to India—and the Masons soon find out that in addition to ice they are carrying as

villainous a crew as ever sailed a ship. But old Captain Mason proves that once a commander, always a commander, and young Nat learns to sail and to use his head. How the two Masons get their cargo of ice to India and come safely home makes as thrilling a sea story as we have had in many years.

**Isabelle Lawrence**

*A Spy in Williamsburg*

Spy stories make good mysteries, and *A Spy in Williamsburg* (1955), with its background and such historical figures as Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, has special values. Its authenticity of detail is vouched for by Colonial Williamsburg, and the story is a rouser. Will Budge the smith is none too prosperous; his family gratefully welcomes Patrick Henry as a lodger. When he is followed by a youth who applies for work as an apprentice and lodging besides, things really look better. The boy Ben Budge is surprised to find that the ever-helpful apprentice slips out of the house nights, and when Ben begins to follow him, things happen thick and fast. The conclusion of the story is a rousing blend of fact, fiction, and excitement.

**Alice Lide and Margaret A. Johansen**

*Mystery of the Mahteb*

*The Wooden Locket*

Amlak, the hero of *Mystery of the Mahteb* (1942), is the son of a conquered king of thirteenth-century Ethiopia. Amlak hates the oppressors of his people but sees no hope of overthrowing them. Then his dying father sends Amlak on a search for "that which is lost," a mysterious symbol of power. Amlak's journey is a thriller. He encounters a people ruled over by a woman who helps him when she is convinced that he is worthy to rule. Finally Amlak becomes the new king of an independent people. This is a colorful, dramatic tale about an interesting hero and period.

*The Wooden Locket* (1953) employs a much milder mystery to tell a modern story



of Polish displaced persons trying to make a new life for themselves in this country. One of them carries the scars of her terrifying war experiences in the form of blind panic which now and then overtakes her. All of them suffer from their unfamiliarity with the language, but the children learn fast, and each member of the family has a contribution to make to his new home, as young Jan proves with the mysterious contents of his wooden locket. The community crisis precipitated by Tilka's panic will tell children something about mob psychology. The whole story has qualities that will deepen children's social understandings and sympathies.

### Stephen Meader

#### Who Rides in the Dark?

Stephen Meader is another author who not only writes well but can include a mystery that keeps the reader guessing from the first page to the last. *Red Horse Hill* has a problem of a lost will, but chiefly it is a good story of a boy and the horses he loves. *Who Rides in the Dark?* does not explain the mystery of the masked rider until the last chapter. It is a good tale about early days in New Hampshire. Daniel Drew, an orphaned stable boy at an old stagecoach inn, helps solve the mystery of the swift night rider on the fine horse. Poor Dan'l nearly loses his own life in the process but lives to enjoy happier days. *Shadow in the Pines* is a thriller which fathers have been known to borrow from their sons. Ted Winslow lives with his grandfather in the Pine Barrens of New Jersey. Like any healthy boy, he knows every inch of the country, and this knowledge, together with his insatiable curiosity, enables him to be of service to the FBI. Between them they round up a gang of saboteurs who were plotting to destroy Fort Dix. *Jonathan Goes West* is about a boy's adventures in the days of the first railroad. Mr. Meader writes so well it is a pleasure to read any of his books. His boys are real boys, well characterized and convincing. His stories are action tales, fast moving and exciting. They are clearly written and

not difficult to read. Boys who would reject other more subtle tales might be lured into reading Mr. Meader's books. Yet in giving boys Stephen Meader's books, you give them good prose and wholesome stories. Particularly worth while is the relationship which usually exists in these stories between adults and boys.

### Howard Pease

#### Secret Cargo and other stories

Howard Pease is a writer of good mysteries. *Hurricane Weather*, *Jungle River*, and *Wind in the Rigging* are only a few of his titles. The outdoor settings, particularly in the sea stories, make an especial appeal. No matter how wild his plot may be, the reader is treated to glimpses of the New Guinea jungles or a storm at sea which are refreshingly real. *Secret Cargo* will perhaps serve as well as any of these stories to indicate their type. Larry Mathews, finding his family without funds, sets off for New Orleans to earn his own living somehow. His only companion is a mongrel dog named Sambo. Larry finally ships on a wretched old trading vessel bound for the South Seas. He manages to smuggle Sambo aboard, too. Larry is a timid boy to begin with, very shy and self-effacing. He is dubbed "Mouse" and is the butt of considerable razzing and rough treatment. Finally, when the bullying boatswain throws Sambo overboard, Mouse goes after his dog. Both are hauled back on board, and that is the beginning of Mouse's growth in courage and backbone. There has been a death on board which Larry suspects was not so accidental as it seemed. Eventually, he solves the mystery of what was in reality a murder. This is a good sea story. There is a desirable character development in Larry which adds to the satisfaction of the conclusion. *Jungle River* carries Don Carter into the New Guinea jungle searching for his father, who was lost in an airplane accident. It is a setting made familiar by World War II, and it is an interesting contrast to the sea stories.

Many more examples could be given, but

these should suffice to show how the mystery story cuts across most forms of fiction—here and now, other lands, historical, and outdoor adventures. Unlike adult "whodunits" the juveniles rarely involve murder. Rather, the element of mystery is introduced to heighten interest and suspense. For the most part these

## Stories of romance

By twelve or fourteen, while boys are still avidly reading adventure stories and biography, girls are turning to stories of romance. In Chapter 1 (pp. 2-14), the pre-adolescent's hunger for this type of reading was discussed with a few suggestions of outstanding books and authors. More are listed in the bibliography for this chapter. Such books are generally to be found in the youth collections of our libraries.

There is considerable difference of opinion about the value of this body of teen-age books. Some teachers, librarians, and parents argue that by twelve or fourteen, children should have attained enough reading skill and social maturity to make the transition to selected choices from adult fiction and nonfiction. They say plenty of boys and girls of

these ages can and do read *Gone with the Wind* or *Kon-Tiki* or *Anna and the King of Siam*. This is probably true. But a great many more girls at this transition period betake themselves to the lush fiction of the popular magazines. Some of these stories are all right, but many are considerably less than good, and few will give youngsters as wholesome insight into their own approaching maturity and first brush with love as the books of Margaret Bell or Betty Cavanna. Poor readers of this pre-adolescent period cannot handle the better adult novels and nonfiction. For them, as a substitute for the fiction magazine habit, let's find the best of the teen-age books, to help little girls grow up with normal, wholesome ideas about romance, marriage, and family life.

## Criteria for here and now stories

How can we evaluate this wealth of realistic fiction for children, when it ranges from picture-stories for the youngest to mystery stories and romance for young people? Turn again to the general criteria in Chapter 2 and ask of a book, whether for the youngest or the oldest, the same questions: Does it have a substantial theme, about something of real significance to a child? Is there a good plot with plenty of action, suspense, and a satisfying conclusion? Are the characters alive and memorable, or are they merely stereotypes of the poor or the alien or just names upon which to build the mystery or romance or regional story? Has the book a style that makes for comfortable reading, captivates the

reader, and keeps him tearing along from page to page? And has it some literary distinction that develops the child's taste even as it enchants him?

In addition to fulfilling these familiar standards, good realistic stories should satisfy some of the child's basic needs. From *One Morning in Maine* to *Strawberry Girl* there is continual emphasis on winning or holding security. The satisfaction of belonging is important in *Plain Girl*, *Little Navajo Bluebird*, and the picture-story, *Wait for William*. Loving and being loved is a powerful motive in *Good-bye, My Lady*, *Moccasin Trail*, and *Cotton in My Sack*. Children's love of change and fun is a motivating force in *Henry Hug-*

Illustration by E. H. Shepard for *Crystal Mountain* by Belle Dorman Rugh, Houghton Mifflin, 1935 (book 5½ x 8½, picture 1 x 1½)

*Five-year-old Danny, with sailor cap and knapsack, accompanies his older brothers in their exciting adventures. With his humorous pen drawings, Shepard has developed an easily recognizable style.*



gins, the Ransome books, and *Little Eddie*. Of course the need to know is not as prominent in fiction as in informational books, but it is important in *The Little Auto*, *Tom Sawyer*, and ...and now *Miguel*, as well as in the mystery tales. And, of course, achievement is a paramount motive in *Yonie Wondernose*, *Down Down the Mountain*, *Beanie*, *Circus Shoes*, and many other realistic stories of modern days. If these books center on the child's basic needs, give him increased insight into his own problems and social relationships, if they fulfill our literary standards for well-written fiction and give children a greater confidence in the fun and challenge of living, then they are good and worth-while books.

Moreover, good realistic stories are valuable because they give real life some of the charm and glamour of fiction. Everyday happenings—going to school, going on a picnic, playing with friends on the street—become more exciting when they are met in a story-book. Certainly, no child should feel that the only romance and adventures life offers have vanished with the fairies. Realistic fiction, when it is sound, opens the child's eyes to the heroic possibilities of everyday living: the fun, the surprises, the occasional excitement, the beauty of fine human relationships. Too many fairy tales or too much fanciful fiction can distort the child's imagination. Every once in a while, you find a child running away

from unpalatable realities by way of the continual reading of fairy tales. Or sometimes a child begins to confuse fact and fancy to the point where he can't tell the truth. These are extreme cases, perhaps, but they do happen. For such children, realistic fiction is doubly important, holding up as it does the picture of children facing reality courageously, accepting hard blows without going under, fighting their way through difficulties patiently and persistently. In short, realistic stories give children an insight into real-life situations, make everyday struggles something to be accepted humorously or determinedly, depending on their gravity. They convince a child that he can do something about his life, have fun and adventures, solve mysteries, and get things done without benefit of any other magic than his own earnest efforts.

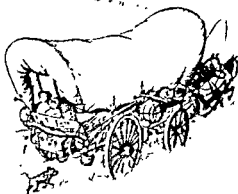


Illustration by Garth Williams  
for *Little House on the Prairie*  
by Laura Ingalls Wilder,  
Harper, 1953 (book 5½ x 8)

*This is only one of hundreds of pictures Garth Williams has made for the commemorative new edition of Laura Ingalls Wilder's eight-volume saga. Not only are his illustrations true to the endlessly changing scene and maturing characters, but they are beautiful and dramatic. The sense of vast space is in these pictures, as is the courage and endurance of this indomitable family. The books represent a remarkable achievement in illustration.*

Realistic books have been most popular for several years. Adults are reading histories, biographies, historical novels, accounts of scientific discoveries, career stories, and stories of peoples of other lands and of our own minority groups. The reading interests of older children and even many fairly young children parallel these closely.

Children's books have always reflected the predominant interests of the adult world. Cataclysmic wars, intimate acquaintance with many countries, and interest in their relationships to each other have recently widened the horizons of adults and made them world-conscious, people-conscious, and history-conscious as never before. It is only natural that their reading should follow these absorbing new interests and that they should encourage children to undertake similar reading. Teachers include historical fiction and books about other lands on their preferred reading lists; librarians promote such books with children, and parents approve heartily of these books. Committees of educators even approach pub-

lishers with the new subject-matter needs of the schools and ask for new books which reflect these national trends. Whether the latest slogan is "Hands Across the Border" or "Racial Tolerance" or "One World," there is a

flourishing crop of new juveniles devoted to the current theme. Their brightly colored pictures are attractive, and the blurbs on the jackets assure the reader of the authenticity of the content.

## Correlating fiction and social studies

This present-day zeal may suggest that the didactic school of writing is overtaking us once again. Although the emphasis is not on theology or on impossibly moralistic behavior, the pressure for information or propaganda may be just as heavy-handed and overzealous. It is increasingly important for adults to be able to distinguish a good story from the synthetic, made-to-specification fiction with which children are being deluged. To reinforce our judgment, we have enough fine realistic fiction for children, which was created not because a slogan or a curriculum outline seemed to require it but because an author had something to write about, a robust story to tell. The children themselves, given the opportunity, pick out these books unerringly, regardless of Newbery Awards or social studies' endorsement.

Along with this adult obsession for realistic books for children has gone an increasing emphasis on correlation of literature with social studies. Many social-studies units can be considerably enriched for children by their reading of good books of fiction related to the unit under consideration. But correlation of literature and social studies should not become constant. It is necessary to remember that a good story is a good story regardless of whether or not it correlates with social-studies outlines, and a poor story is a poor story even if it was written with a particular outline in mind. To fail to promote fine literature because it does not happen to fit curriculum units is as short-sighted as to promote commonplace, second-rate fiction because it was written particularly for such a unit. It is far better to turn to the substantial factual books in this field and allow the child to take his fiction along other lines. Certainly it would

be just as absurd to expect all the child's reading to correlate with his social studies as it would be to expect adults to forego their favorite poems or an exciting novel because such reading did not correlate with their workaday interests.

Perhaps by being aware of the richness of the whole offering in the realistic field and of its wide range and variety, we can develop a feeling for what is substantial and fine and a corresponding sensitivity to what is thin or labored or trivial. Actually, most of the social-studies areas for older children can be supplemented by excellent fiction. But it should not trouble us if right in the middle of his study of the Congo or of medieval times some child wishes to read *Tom Sawyer*. Why shouldn't he? Often a change is a good thing. It is quite conceivable that he is temporarily fed up on jungles or knights and wants to get back to his own boy's world. Let him read *Tom Sawyer*, by all means. He'll return to his geography or his castles and moats with a fresh perspective. So, whether children are at the moment following the rise of the guilds in medieval days or good neighboring with South American countries or being interracially conscious, they should have the best realistic fiction available, let the slogans and the units fall where they will!

Today, when historical fiction for adults contains much that is sensational and erotic, historical fiction in the juvenile field includes some of our finest books. And though adults flit from one historical novel to another, children are faithful to their favorites for years. So such stories as *Calico Bush*, *Johnny Tremam*, *Caddie Woodlawn*, *The Courage of Sarah Noble*, *Tree of Freedom*, *Winter Danger*, and the fine Laura Ingalls Wilder series,

which are good literature are continuously popular with young readers. Such books are so numerous it will be impossible to do

more than call attention in this chapter to some of the best, and to list a slightly wider selection in the bibliography.

## American historical fiction

Rachel Field

*Calico Bush*

One of the finest books Rachel Field (p. 146) ever wrote is *Calico Bush*, the story of Marguerite Ledoux, a French bound-out girl of thirteen, who travels to the state of Maine with a Massachusetts family in 1743. On the long sail from Marblehead to Mount Desert, Marguerite comes to know the Sargent family, and proves to them her grit and resourcefulness. She remains, nevertheless, a servant and an alien in their midst. When the Sargents finally reach Maine, they find their land, but the house has been burned down by the Indians. What is more, they are told that the Indians want no settlers on that particular property. Joel Sargent builds his house there anyway, in spite of warnings. In this new country Marguerite makes a fast friend of a remarkable old woman, Aunt Hepsa, who understands the medicinal properties of herbs, can spin, dye, and weave, and has apparently all the wisdom and skills the pioneer women needed sorely. There are brief days of joy in the new settlement, but there are tragic and frightening days, too—the Sargent baby is burned to death, and an Indian raid is diverted only by Marguerite's courage and ingenuity. At the end of the story, the Sargents gratefully offer Marguerite her freedom, but she will not leave them. She has shared their joy and their sorrows; they are her family, and she knows, besides, that she will never find anyone else so wise as Aunt Hepsa.

This book may well serve as a model of sound historical fiction. The picture of the times and the people is not only authentic but unusually well balanced. The hardships, the monotony, and the perils of pioneer life are there, unvarnished and frightening. The com-

pensatory rewards may seem slight to young readers, but there can be no doubt in their minds about the sturdy, undismayed character of these early settlers. Here is no glamorized history, full of picturesque dangers in which the leading characters always triumph. Instead, the book portrays well-intentioned, hard-working human beings, whose plans sometimes go wrong, who make mistakes, who suffer grievous tragedy through their own weakness, but who persevere with fortitude and unwavering hope. So *Calico Bush* is no bleak tract on pioneer hardships; it is a heartening story of people helping each other and gratefully enjoying small blessings, brief interludes of happy companionship. The growing respect and affection of these people for each other and especially for the alien girl, Marguerite, give a warm emotional overtone to the whole story. Beautifully written, this book presents a brave, frank picture of early days and ways. (See "Winter," p. 500.)

Although many people consider *Calico Bush* Rachel Field's finest book, *Hitty* (p. 338), her story of a doll, won the Newbery Award. It is primarily a tale of the doll's adventures, but it gives a good picture of a century of American life and so might be included among the books of historical fiction.

Cornelia Meigs

*Clearing Weather*

*Master Simon's Garden*

*The Willow Whistle and other stories*

Cornelia Meigs was born in Illinois and grew up in the Midwest, but since she came from New England stock on both sides of her family, ships and the sea were in her blood. Her great-grandfather, Commodore John Rodgers, who fought the Barbary pirates, was her particular hero when she was a little girl. Now her publisher thinks that when Miss

Meigs picks up her pen to write, "the spirit of the old Commodore is prone to whisper in her ear—'Let it be about ships.'"<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps this heritage does explain why many of her books are about the sea and why most of them are historical. She used to play at being the old Commodore when she was a child, and that very play, together with the family stories she heard and the tales she made up, was perhaps the beginning of her lifelong interest in people's roots and the origin of their ideas and attitudes.

She has already written well over twenty books for children, from a good train story for the youngest, *The Wonderful Locomotive*, to such fine tales for youth as *Clearing Weather* and *Vanished Island*. In between lies the bulk of her books, written for children from nine to twelve or fourteen years old. She is an able and versatile writer of children's books but not overwhelmingly popular.

Cornelia Meigs is interested not only in our historical past but also in the beginnings of ideas and their development. Her stories sometimes start in the Old World, England or Ireland; they include such historical periods as colonial settlements in New England, the explorations of Zebulon Pike in the West, and pioneering in the Mississippi country. But her stories are always something more than historical fiction. Each one carries a theme which, regardless of the setting or time, continues to be a sound idea for any generation. Indeed, Cornelia Meigs manages frequently, in these stories of the past, to illuminate certain problems of the present.

For example, *Clearing Weather* deals with Nicholas Drury's struggles to keep alive his uncle's shipbuilding business in the discouraging days following the American Revolution. Only through the coöperation of the whole community is the little town able to reestablish itself. The successful voyage of their beautiful new ship, the *Jocasta*, built and given a cargo by their own efforts and

sacrifice, brings clearing weather for both Nicholas and the town. The theme of community coöperation is a good one today.

*Master Simon's Garden* carries a still more striking theme. In the little Puritan New England settlement called Hopewell, where everything is done for utility and thrift, Master Simon develops his beautiful garden—a riot of colorful flowers and sweet herbs. It is an expression of his philosophy of tolerance and love in complete contrast to the intolerance and suspicion of some of his neighbors. This ideal is followed through three generations, and at the end of the story, Master Simon's great-grandson, Stephen, in the period of the American Revolution, is still fighting intolerance and the whispering campaigns which foster it.

On a simpler scale, *The Willow Whistle* deals with white people living in the Indian country, where some of the tribes are friendly and some are hostile. A little girl, Mary Anne, is carried off for a visit by a friendly chief, whose tribe is suddenly attacked by enemy raiders. Throughout the long search for the child, her father never loses faith in Chief Gray Eagle. The willow whistle Eric has taught Mary Anne to make leads to her rescue. The theme shining through the tale is that only through mutual faith and kindness can races learn to live together.

But these are not propaganda stories, and Cornelia Meigs is not writing with a message always in mind. Every one of her books has action aplenty and plots that are absorbing and often exciting. However, the plots are stronger because of their genesis in a strong theme. It is the theme which gives unity to the action and significance to the conclusion.

The descriptions are beautifully written and reflect her knowledge and love of the varied sections of the country in which the tales are laid. Whether it is the Iowa country around Des Moines in *New Moon*, or colonial Vermont in *The Covered Bridge*, or colonial Pennsylvania in *Wind in the Chimney*, or northern Minnesota and the Mississippi River country in *Swift Rivers*, or the ocean in book

<sup>1</sup>Doris Patee, "Cornelia Meigs," *The Horn Book*, September-October 1944, p. 357. This issue of the magazine is devoted to Miss Meigs and her books.

after book, you see the outdoor world of prairie or meadow, cape or sea, briefly but vividly. Moreover, wind, storms, floods, river currents, and soil all play their parts. Her characters must not only surmount their own personal difficulties, but they must also master the obstacles nature puts in their way. A debt must be paid, even if it means tramping across the Vermont hills on a night of bitter cold with a blizzard brewing.<sup>1</sup> The old covered bridge must be saved no matter how threatening the floods may be. Logs must be floated down the Mississippi to prove that it can be done, regardless of personal peril of many kinds.<sup>2</sup> There is a heroic quality about these stories, an assumption that what needs to be done will be done at any cost. These are qualities which helped make this country what it is—qualities to be cherished and preserved.

Analyzing Cornelia Meigs' books, you realize that it is the idea of the story that remains in your mind rather than the characters. There are a few exceptions. Master Simon is a memorable figure. In *New Moon*, Dick, the Irish boy, and Garrity, the old shepherd, come vividly to life. But the characters are frequently less clearly drawn than the events in which they play their parts. The boy in *Swift Rivers* you remember not for the impression you have of him but for his terrific fight under water. The girls in Cornelia Meigs' stories are particularly indistinguishable but never the parts they play. Debby, in *Wind in the Chimney*, is much like the little girls in *The Willow Whistle* and *The Covered Bridge*, but you always remember Debby's all-night struggle to finish weaving the coverlet which was to secure for the family its beloved house.

This inability to create memorable characters may help explain why Miss Meigs' books are not always so popular as they might be. The dominance of ideas rather than vivid, individual characters means that these

stories are somewhat more intellectual than most children are used to. Certainly the books should be discussed if children are to grasp their implications and enjoy fully the exciting action with which most of the stories culminate. *New Moon*, *Willow Whistle*, *Wind in the Chimney*, and *The Covered Bridge* are for children nine to twelve years old. *Master Simon's Garden*, *Trade Wind*, *Swift Rivers*, and *Clearing Weather* are liked by the more serious readers from twelve to fourteen. It is worth taking pains to introduce these books to children, to discuss the story interest and the underlying themes as the children read. Children who enjoy one of these books usually go on reading Cornelia Meigs and growing up with her tales. These provide a good introduction to substantial fiction.

#### Elizabeth Coatsworth

Away Goes Sally

Five Bushel Farm

The Fair American and other stories

The Newbery Award was given to Elizabeth Coatsworth's *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*, a fanciful tale, exquisite and sad, involving a poor artist, a humble cat, and a Buddhist miracle. But the children like her historical fiction much better, particularly *Away Goes Sally*, *Five Bushel Farm*, and *The Fair American*. Her writing has an easy flow and establishes unerringly the mood and temper of the tale. Take the opening page of *The Fair American*:

The first thing that Pierre saw as he awakened was the moonlight that lay across the darkness of his room like the blade of some great sword. Jean, the old valet, was beside him, or at least the boy thought so; but since the man, whoever he was, carried no light, he could not be certain until he heard Jean's voice low and urgent:

"Get up, Master Pierre, quickly. They are coming back, I think."

Pierre slipped out of bed in silence. It was May, and the polished floor felt cold to his bare feet. He could smell the odor of damp earth and blossoming bushes from the overgrown gardens that surrounded the drafty old château in which he had always lived. He stood

<sup>1</sup>The Covered Bridge introduces Ethan Allen.  
<sup>2</sup>Swift Rivers. Period 1830. First logging on the Mississippi.



for a moment listening; but nothing stirred except something small in the ivy outside his window, and near at hand the quick dry breathing of the servant.

"I hear nothing," said the boy.

"Hush." Again there came the whisper. "Here are your clothes. Hurry."

Here is suspense, something hushed and fearful in every line, and that one phrase, "like the blade of some great sword," strikes the note of terror that is to recur throughout the book. The story has to do with a boy of the French aristocracy, escaping from the terrorists after the French Revolution. This beginning establishes the atmosphere and the suspense. Contrast it with the first page of *Away Goes Sally*. There the chatter of the aunts sounds the prevailing feminine note.

*Away Goes Sally* has to do with the migration of Sally's whole family of uncles and aunts from Massachusetts to Maine not long after the American Revolution. The family travels in a little house on sledges pulled by six yoke of oxen, and the story moves along as leisurely as the little house. *Five Bushel Farm* sees the family established on their new farm. Andy joins Sally's circle of friends and introduces a desirable masculine note into their activities. In *Fair American*, the French boy, Pierre, ships on the American sailing vessel. Sally's resourcefulness saves Pierre's life when a French officer boards the ship to look for refugees. Again, as in the books of Cornelia Meigs, the past throws fresh light on some of the poignant problems of the present, and the *Fair American*, bearing to our shores the stricken refugee child, is a moving symbol. These three books about the early nineteenth century appeal to children of ten or eleven. The exquisite poems dividing the chapters (p. 172) add to their unusual value and charm.

Walter D. Edmonds  
*The Matchlock Gun*  
Tom Whipple

Walter D. Edmonds is the author of the popular adult book, *Drums Along the Mo-*

*hawk*. His first book for children, *The Matchlock Gun*, was given the Newbery award in 1942. A mother, alone with her baby and young son, suddenly discovers that the Indians are near. Her little boy, who has been trained to fire an old matchlock gun at her signal, stays on guard in the house while she watches outside until the Indians discover her. As the Indians start for her, she gives the signal, the gun goes off on schedule, but she falls unconscious with a tomahawk through her shoulder. The suspense in this story is almost unbearable, and the terrifying climax is heightened by lurid pictures. The story is well written, and the preliminary glimpse of happy family relationships balances somewhat the harrowing quality of the story. Boys of nine and ten enjoy this story.

Mr. Edmonds' next book, *Tom Whipple*, also historically authentic, is the amusing story of a country boy who ships aboard a sailing vessel for the express purpose of paying a visit to the Czar of all the Russias. How he achieves his exotic purpose and remains, throughout the story, Tom Whipple, upstate New York farm boy, is an amazing yarn.

These two books remind us that historical fiction for children must be more than authentic. It must seem as probable and possible as life today. The extraordinary may enter in, as it does in modern life, but it should not constitute the whole story. Life for most people has only its occasional moments of terror or rapture or triumph. Focusing a whole story upon such moments not only leans toward sensationalism but puts an undue strain on the reader's credulity. Mr. Edmonds barely skirts these pitfalls.

Rebecca Caudill  
*Tree of Freedom*

This book (1954) about the Revolutionary War period is sounder historical fiction because of its vivid characterizations and homely details of everyday living, which make the past understandable and natural. Each child of a family moving to Kentucky may take one prized possession. Stephanie carries an



Illustration by Lynd Ward for *Johnny Tremain* by Esther Forbes, Houghton Mifflin, 1943 (original in two colors, book 5¼ x 8)

*The theme of this picture is dramatically suggested by the exaggerated size of Johnny's erect figure set against the distant buildings and the tiny figures of the armed men. It tells as plainly as James Otis' words, "We give all we have... that a man can stand up."*

times there is no cornbread and the children grow droopy and pale. But always Stephanie tends her little sprout of an apple tree, "tree of freedom," she calls it. This is the theme of the story, and it speaks to us today, because in every generation the tree of freedom must be nurtured if it is to survive.

### Esther Forbes

#### Johnny Tremain

Esther Forbes received the 1942 Pulitzer Prize for her adult biography *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*. Her *Johnny Tremain*, which was an outgrowth of the research expended on *Paul Revere*, received the 1944 Newbery Award. In her Newbery acceptance speech, she explained that while she was working on the adult biography, she had to stifle any tendency toward fiction. But she was continually teased by the story possibilities of Boston's apprentices, who were always getting into scrapes of one kind or another. To illustrate her point, she related the hilarious doings of one of these apprentices who precipitated the Boston Massacre, and she concluded:

*In this way an apprentice of whom we know nothing except that he was "greasy and diminutive" played his minute part in our history and disappears forever. I'd like to know more of him.<sup>1</sup>*

So she promised herself that as soon as possible she would treat herself to writing some fiction about the apprentices. The result-

<sup>1</sup>Esther Forbes, "The Newbery Medal Acceptance," *The Horn Book*, July-August, 1944, p. 264.

apple seed, because that is what her grandmother brought from France. When Noel, the eldest son, wants to take his dulcimer, it starts anew the feud between father and son. But the mother intervenes, "Twon't hurt him any. An' a little music won't hurt Kentucky, either. . . . He's got his rifle, ain't he, as well as his dulcimore? He'll use it like a man. See if he don't." And he does, but the quarrel is not resolved until the end of the war.

In the stockade, where the family takes refuge from the Indians, the mother is horrified by the smells, the flies, the bad water, and the crowding. After they are on their own land, the father, Jonathan, and Noel go to war, and the backbreaking care of the crops falls to the mother, Rob, and Stephanie. There are anxieties, too, big and little ones. The legality of their claim depends on the turn of the war. Sometimes there is no salt and the green beans are tasteless. And some-

ing book, *Johnny Tremain*, represents a high point in American historical fiction for children and young people. It is a great book for children to read at twelve or fourteen and to reread with added appreciation in college. In fact, like all of the greatest juveniles, it is a book as much for adults as for children.

*Johnny Tremain* tells the story of a silversmith's apprentice who lived in the exciting days that marked the beginning of the American Revolution. Johnny's master is second only to the famous Paul Revere as a silversmith, but Johnny knows that he himself is unrivaled among all apprentices. Competent and cocky, a humble artist but an unbearably conceited boy, Johnny is harsh and overbearing with his fellow apprentices and ambitious for himself. Just as he achieves a notable design, the apprentices decide to play a joke on him. The results are far worse than they intended. Not only is Johnny's design lost but he is left with a burned hand, maimed for life. His career as a silversmith is over even before it is well begun. Out of work and embittered, he still must stand on his own feet or go under. He stands.

This is the beginning of a story that carries Johnny and his friend Rab into the thick of Boston's pre-Revolutionary activities. These two friends come in contact with such men as John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and Paul Revere. The boys turn into men, as boys have a way of doing in stirring times, and their private and personal concerns suffer strange ups and downs in the growing process. Johnny fights his way back to health and self-confidence as a hostler and enjoys his horse almost as much as his silversmithing. He hates and loves and gets over both. He is fascinated with the rich and glamorous but is disillusioned with them before he gets through. He is devoted to his friend Rab and realizes his worth even when he falls out with him. Indeed, his inarticulate love for Rab intensifies the tragedy of that scene when he finds Rab dying from wounds received in the first little skirmish of the Revolution. In that fight men and boys lined up in the square

—some to die. But they knew what they were dying for, Miss Forbes assures us, and they believed it "was worth more than their own lives." "We are still," she adds, "fighting for simple things 'that a man may stand up.'"

So Johnny Tremain from the past illumines the present. The book has so many values they are difficult to summarize. To children carrying any physical handicaps, Johnny's bitterness over his maimed hand is understandable. When, at the end, Dr. Warren tells Johnny that his hand could have been healed so that it would have been usable, Johnny's indifference shows how far he has traveled since those first days when he vowed he'd "get" Dove for his part in the tragedy. *Johnny Tremain* gives no one-sided account of pre-Revolutionary days. The book makes the colonists and Red Coats alive as the histories never seem to. The British, especially, are amazingly human in their forbearance, while the confusion and uncertainty of the colonists are frighteningly real. All the details of the everyday life of the period are drawn from the full stores of Miss Forbes' long research; but they are casually and expertly woven into the story, never dragged in for themselves.

These are qualities that recommend the book, but its great value lies in its spirit. Stirring times seem often to beget strong people. Johnny was only a boy when his hand was maimed, but he never went under. The men of the Revolution knew the seriousness of what they were doing. Hanging went for traitors in those days, as always, and they knew they were all candidates for that inglorious end. Still they persisted in their work of informing and organizing the colonists for concerted action. Events marched on, sometimes tragic, sometimes farcical, always perilous, involving even the boys and the women. There was a steadiness, a coolness, and a fortitude about those people that was magnificent. No reader will forget this book.

In 1946 Miss Forbes made a second book from *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*—a juvenile biography called *America's Paul*

*Revere*. This book has an extremely solid text and a sound one. The illustrations by Lynd Ward are so startling in their beauty and drama that many young readers who enjoy *Johnny Tremain* will also wish to read *America's Paul Revere*.

**William O. Steele**  
*Winter Danger*

There is no writer for children today who can re-create wilderness life more vividly and movingly than William Steele. Children eight to twelve can themselves read his books, which will also command the respectful interest of fourteen-year-olds. The stories are well written, with good dialogue and plenty of suspense and action. This writer creates flesh-and-blood characters—spunky, long-suffering children, and grown-ups who struggle and survive in a tough pioneer world and expect their children to do the same. The breath of the wilderness is in these stories, as well as the very human longing for a settled security.

*The Buffalo Knife* (1952) follows the vicissitudes of two families who travel down the Tennessee River. The character development of the boys is an important part of the story.

In *Tomahawks and Trouble* two boys and "a mite of a girl" are taken captive by hostile Indians. Janie's biting the leg of her captor, who is trying to throw away her cornhusk dolly, wins the children their deadliest enemy. Their escape and survival in the wilderness requires the killing of old "Tater Nose" as Janie calls him. This story is not for young or sensitive children, although Janie, "the bravest, addle-pated little girl in creation," comes through safely with her doll. The two boys learn the hard way that anyone can make a mistake but no one can afford to hold a grudge.

*Winter Danger* (1954) is the moving story of a conflict between a "woody" father, who knows no trade and cannot farm, and his son Caje, who has rarely had a roof over his head. Signs of hostile Indians and a bitter

winter force the father to leave his son with farmer relatives. Poor, dirty, half-starved little Caje loves the cleanliness, good food, and gentle ways of his kinfolk, but he learns that security is not guaranteed even by a settled life. He also learns compassion for his lonely, intrepid father, and a great deal about sharing.

*Wilderness Journey* (1953) has unique values, too. Children are likely to think of all pioneers as hardy, and a wilderness journey as a kind of prolonged Boy Scout hike. But poor, measly, ten-year-old Flan can't hold an ax or shoot an animal or even skin it. His big brothers scorn him, and when quinsy lays him low the family travels on without him. How he makes the journey later with Chapman Green, a "Long Hunter," is an exciting study in wilderness ways and skills. It is also the story of a pindling boy who develops into a resourceful lad.

These brief summaries of absorbing stories can barely suggest their outstanding qualities. Using your head and your last ounce of strength is the daily necessity for survival. The development and the increasing social perceptiveness of the characters in these stories are as important as the detailed pictures of our pioneer past.

**Evelyn Sibley Lampman**  
*Tree Wagon*

Another outstanding book that re-creates a particular historical period and movement is *Tree Wagon* (1953), the story of an enormous wagon train that traveled from Iowa to Oregon in 1847. The story is unique because Mr. Luelling was a nurseryman, and his wagon carried seven hundred tree shoots for the new country. When his wagon slowed up the rate of travel, the big train decided to go on without him. One other family remained with the tree wagon, and the little group moved into hostile Indian country on its own. When yelling Indians in war paint swooped down on them, an amazing thing happened which guaranteed their safety. Sure enough,

the two families got through to Oregon with half the trees living, as well as Seenie's special gooseberry bush for which she had long ago sacrificed her extra petticoat to serve as a sunshade. The author vouches for the authenticity of this fine story.

**Carol Ryrie Brink**  
**Caddie Woodlawn**

In addition to the great historical stories about our country, there is another kind of book which, although its scenes may be laid in the colonial or Revolutionary period, does not seem to qualify as historical fiction because interest is centered in the story, and not the story of a period. *Little Women* is such a book; its setting is the Civil War period, but it is predominantly a story of family life. Carol Brink's *Caddie Woodlawn*, one of the children's great favorites today, is like *Little Women* in this respect and is worth mentioning in detail because of its popularity and usefulness.

Like *Little Women*, *Caddie Woodlawn* belongs to the Civil War period, but the war plays no part in the story. Caddie and her family lived in Wisconsin when Indians were still a menace, but life on the whole was fairly comfortable and happy. Caddie, the tomboy, and her two brothers extracted every possible bit of fun and adventure the frontier settlement could yield. Caddie's long friendship with the Indians and her courageous personal appeal to them helped prevent a threatened uprising. Even so, this book is far less of a frontier story—settlers versus Indians—than it is the entertaining evolution of a tomboy. The fun *Caddie gets out of life* suggests the usefulness of this book in the historical group in counteracting the over-seriousness of most historical fiction. One little girl said, "I just hate pioneer stories. All the people do is struggle and struggle and struggle!" To such a child we may well give *Caddie Woodlawn*, if only to prove that the children of the frontier had their fun, too.

Mrs. Brink has also written two delightful modern stories, *Family Grandstand* and

*Family Sabbatical*, about the children of a university professor. See the bibliography for Chapter 15, Here and Now.

**Laura Ingalls Wilder**  
**Little House in the Big Woods and other stories**

Children's sense of the past is a confused one at best. Gas burners are more incredible to them than candlelight, and horse-and-buggy travel quite as odd as a trip by canal boat. Indeed, it may be easier for them to understand and enter into the colonial period of American history than into the more immediate past. The pioneering and settling of the Midwest have fewer picturesque details than has the dramatic first colonization. Frontier life has more of the humdrum "struggle" the little girl complained of, less romantic adventure. Until Laura Ingalls Wilder undertook the writing of her family's experiences in settling the Midwest, there were no books which really held children's interest while opening their eyes to this period.

In 1953 Mrs. Wilder's publisher reissued the books with new illustrations by Garth Williams, and the following year the Children's Library Association presented a special and long overdue award to Mrs. Wilder for her "substantial and lasting contribution to children's literature." Children love all eight books and grow up with the Ingalls girls and the Wilder boys, from *Little House in the Big Woods* to the romantic *Happy Golden Years* when Laura Ingalls and Almanzo Wilder are married. In the process they have seen the sod houses in the Midwest giving place to wood, and claims growing into towns. Best of all, the maturity of these books grows with the children. The first book appeals to children of eight or nine; the last is written for the almost-grown-up girl, who by this time feels that Laura is her oldest and her dearest friend. Few other books give children this sense of continuity and progress.

The following passage from *On the Banks of Plum Creek* could well serve as the keynote to all the books about the Ingalls family:

The wind was screaming fiercer and louder outside. Snow whirled swish-swishing against the windows. But Pa's fiddle sang in the warm, lamp-lighted house.

Here are the family's bulwarks against all misfortunes—the warm, lighted house made beautiful by Ma, their own love and sense of security, and Pa's courageous music-making in the face of every difficulty.

The saga begins with the Ingalls family in their log cabin in the Wisconsin forests, *Little House in the Big Woods*. The children are all girls. The oldest is Mary, who later goes blind, then the active Laura, and baby Carrie. Grace eventually displaces Carrie as the baby. In this first book we become acquainted with Ma's skill in cooking wonderful, triumphant meals out of limited resources, and especially we know her good bread, baked every Saturday. It fills the small cabin with its delicious fragrance and nourishes the girls' growing bodies even as Pa's gay songs and fiddle music nourish their spirits. Here, too, we first see the little china woman which Ma is to carry with her through all their journeys. She puts it over the fireplace only when the dwelling is worthy, a real house and home. All these things give the children a sense of comfort and security:

But Laura lay awake a little while, listening to Pa's fiddle softly playing and to the lonely sound of the wind in the Big Woods. She looked at Pa sitting on the bench by the hearth, the firelight gleaming on his brown hair and beard and glistering on the honey-brown fiddle. She looked at Ma, gently rocking and knitting.

She thought to herself, "This is now."

She was glad that the cosy house, and Pa and Ma and the firelight and the music, were now. They could not be forgotten, she thought, because now is now. It can never be a long time ago.

So every child thinks, but soon for Laura the Big Woods are long ago. The family moves out to the wild Kansas country and begins the adventures described in the *Little House on the Prairie*. On the Banks of Plum Creek finds the Ingalls family in Minnesota; By the

*Shores of Silver Lake* carries them to the Dakota Territory, where they remain either on their lake or in town.

Meanwhile *Farmer Boy* begins the account of the Wilder family of boys on their prosperous New York farm, where everything is abundant and the meals they eat make our mouths water. We follow Almanzo Wilder from his first day at school to the proud moment when he is given his own colt to break and train. In this book the modern child is given incidentally a sense of money values in terms of human labor. Almanzo knows fifty cents as so many hours of backbreaking toil over the family potato crop. Fine horses, good food, and prosperity give the Wilder boys an easier but no happier start in life than the Ingalls girls have.

*The Long Winter* finds the Ingalls family living in town. Of the whole series, this book is one no modern child should miss. One blizzard follows another until the railroads cease to run and the little town is cut off from supplies for months. Fuel gives out, and they have to twist straw into sticks to burn. Ma devises a button lamp to save oil. All day the sound of their little hand mill is heard as different members of the family take turns grinding wheat, their last stand against hunger. Finally the wheat begins to give out, and the whole community faces starvation. Then it is Almanzo Wilder, not Pa Ingalls, who rides out into the trackless, snow-driven prairie to buy wheat from a farmer who has it. He succeeds, and the conclusion of the book is happy and humorous. Once more the Ingalls family has survived, but, alas, Pa, the ever-resourceful hero of all the earlier books, is here supplanted by the youthful Almanzo. The last two books—*Little Town on the Prairie* and *These Happy Golden Years*—carry Laura into teaching and then into marriage with Almanzo. (See "The Fourth Day," p. 497.)

Here is a splendid cycle of time and events, chronicled with a simplicity and humor that children heartily enjoy. There are plenty of hard struggles in these books—struggles with droughts, grasshopper plagues, blizzards, food

shortages, floods, and fire. But there is fun, too—heavenly days on the sun-soaked prairies, triumphs of ingenuity in cookery or sewing or carpentry, a real glass window achieved unexpectedly, a guest arriving out of nowhere, spirited horses to ride behind, and Pa's old songs and gay tunes to lift the heart. These books are never lugubrious but are filled instead with heart-warming courage and high spirits. In the last book, *These Happy Golden Years*, a title which speaks for the whole series, Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote in her daughter's copy:

And so farewell to childhood days,  
 Their joys, and hopes and fears.  
 But Father's voice and his fiddle's song  
 Go echoing down the years.<sup>1</sup>

A sixth-grade teacher, Miss Ophelia Smith of the Cleveland Robert Fulton School, made

<sup>1</sup>Irene Smith, "Laura Ingalls Wilder and the Little House Books," *The Horn Book*, September-October 1943, p. 306. Delightful account of Mrs. Wilder then and now, with family photographs of Ma, Pa, the four girls, and Almanzo.



these Wilder books the center of a valuable unit of work. For their English, the children (a major work group<sup>2</sup>) read the whole series; each child reported in detail on one particular book; and the group evaluated them all at the conclusion of the reports. They noted the geographical setting of each story, the growth and development of the characters, the problems, difficulties, and joys the family shared. They wrote about or discussed such items as the author's powers of characterization, her ability to rouse sympathy and hold interest, her descriptions, humor, and general style. In science they studied the flora and fauna of the tales and also noted every implement or mechanical device employed by Ma, Pa, or their neighbors in subduing the wilderness and making life more comfortable. They looked up the historical aspects of the books, particularly the homestead laws and the Indian problem. A visit to the Historical Museum clarified and enriched their ideas of clothing, transportation, household equipment, farm implements, even the games of the times. One game of Fractions, played

<sup>2</sup>Able children with an enriched curriculum.

"Pa Prepares for Winter," "An Evening of Music," and "Hauling Wood" are the captions given by the young artists to their illustrations for *On the Banks of Plum Creek* and *By the Shores of Silver Lake*. Robert Fulton School, sixth grade; principal, Mrs. Edna Skelly; teacher, Miss Ophelia Smith.

Illustrations by children in Cleveland Public Schools





Illustration by Leonard Weisgard for *The Courage of Sarah Noble* by Alice Dalgliesh, Scribner, 1954 (original in color, book 5 3/4 x 8, picture 5 x 5 1/2)

*Whether Weisgard is painting an intensitive bunny or Sarah Noble reading to Indian children, his figures have a sturdy reality, his composition is effective, and the storytelling qualities delightful.*

means of unusual episodes that give him momentary glimpses of other days and ways.

Alice Dalgliesh is especially successful in this field. *The Bears on Hemlock Mountain* (1952) can be read to five-year-olds and read by the eights. At first the story seems almost contemporary—a little boy is sent to his aunt's to borrow a kettle. But the kettle is a huge iron one, and Jonathan must go up and over a mountain—and there could be bears up there. His mother says that's all nonsense, that there are no bears on Hemlock Mountain. But there *are*, and Jonathan meets two big ones. What he does to save himself is surprising. For young children this story is not only a thriller, it is a chiller, and they love quick-thinking Jonathan of long ago.

*The Courage of Sarah Noble* (1954) is more richly historical and, according to Miss Dalgliesh, a real episode as well. Little eight-year-old Sarah is sent into the wilderness to cook and care for her father because her mother cannot leave or move a sick baby. But before Sarah and her father set off, her mother wraps the little girl in a cloak as warm as her love and says, "Keep up your courage, Sarah Noble." Little Sarah travels to her mother's marching words, and when wolves threaten them in the forest, or they sleep in strange cabins with unfriendly folk, or Sarah is left alone with an Indian family, she wraps her mother's cloak and her words warmly about her and keeps up her courage. When this story was read to a particularly timid urban youngster just Sarah's age, her teacher asked, "Pat, do you think you could do what Sarah did?" Pat, big-eyed and grave, said slowly, "Well, I'd be awful scared but I'd try. Yes, I could do it, I know I could." That is one of the wonderful results of his-

much like Authors, was a poser, and occupied some of their arithmetic periods. In music they learned Pa's songs and many others, as well as the dances of the times. Their art work centered on the animals or favorite scenes from the different books, and finally they made a mural summarizing the whole series. The synthesis of all these activities was a spirited assembly program for the whole school, with reports, exhibits, and discussions of the Wilder books. This unit occupied almost two months, but the children's interest never flagged.

Alice Dalgliesh  
*The Courage of Sarah Noble*  
Thanksgiving Story

A young mother who was taking her eight-year-old to visit her home town was rudely jolted when he remarked, "Gee! Mom, it will be fun to learn about the long, long ago when you were a little girl." This is fairly typical of a young child's time sense. His excursions into the past must be made gradually by



torical stories—they give youngsters new vistas and stretch their young spirits.

*Thanksgiving Story* (1954) is a fictional account of the voyage of the *Mayflower* and the first year at Plymouth, culminating in the thanksgiving feast with the Indians. It is centered in the experiences of the Hopkins family, especially the children, and is a remarkably moving little story considering how difficult it must have been to avoid the stereotyped episodes. Helen Sewell's clear, bright pictures reinforce the colorful narrative which young children thoroughly enjoy.

*The Fourth of July Story* must have been even more difficult to do, with its large gal-

lery of leading characters and the complex theme of independence and restoration of good relationships with England. But again *Miss Dalglish* has selected her people and episodes so carefully that the story is dramatic and not too complicated for the understanding and enjoyment of children six to eight.

*The Columbus Story*, a good beginning biography, will be considered later (p. 521). With these simple, colorful stories Miss Dalglish has set a new pattern for developing in young children a feeling for the moving drama of history. It is a significant contribution.

## Stories about the ancient world

Stories of the Old World begin with primitive man and touch almost every major country and period. They are too numerous to permit more than a cursory review of a few outstanding books and periods most frequently used in schools and enjoyed by children in general.

### Lucile Morrison

#### *The Lost Queen of Egypt*

For the superior reader, the child who at twelve or thirteen can read anything he wishes to, Lucile Morrison's *The Lost Queen of Egypt* (1937) is a thrilling story. The author presents an intimate picture of the family life of one of the Pharaohs and makes understandable their peculiar devotion to each other and to the dynasty. The heroine is Ankhsenpaaten, the Pharaoh's third daughter, a lively, mischievous five-year-old at the beginning of the story. Through her eyes, the reader sees the court ceremonies, the dress, the foods, and the customs of this ancient Egyptian kingdom.

The story begins about 1580 B.C. in the royal nurseries of Akhenaten, Pharaoh of Egypt, and Nefertiti, his queen. Their six little daughters are being arrayed for the arrival of the Great Royal Mother. Ankhsenpaaten, or "Small Bird" as she is called, is

more than ordinarily intelligent. Already she has begun to sense the disquieting overtones in the apparently serene life of the royal family. She knows that their grandmother's visit is for a purpose. Enemies threaten the kingdom of the idealistic Pharaoh; the old queen knows there must be sons immediately to stabilize the dynasty and hold the enemy at bay. The Royal Mother decides that three of the little girls must be betrothed at once to guarantee the succession, and she attends to the betrothals promptly.

Ankhsenpaaten is relieved when the soldierly Tutankhaten is chosen for her, since he alone of the royal blood has shown a reckless courage and vitality equal to her own. At the time of their betrothal, it seems unlikely that they will ever have to reign, for they are third in the line of succession. Nevertheless, their education for ruling begins at once under the loving eye of the frail king. The royal children are also guided and encouraged by a young artist, Kenofer, who loves them both.

When a series of deaths calls this popular young pair to the throne, they become Tutankhamon and Ankhsenamun and seem destined to happiness and a long reign. Instead, they find themselves the victims of one intrigue after another. Kenofer is able to pro-

tect them for a while. Meanwhile, he discovers how deeply he loves the queen, but he never swerves for an instant in his devotion to them both as rulers of Egypt. Even Kenofers vigilance and the queen's watchfulness are unequal to the machinations of Ay, the court villain. When the young king dies by poisoning, the queen is trapped in the palace to be forced either to marry the traitorous Ay or to die herself. How Kenofers rescues her; how, in disguise, they turn to the river and live on their boat like hundreds of humble river people; and how the tragic young queen learns at last that she can find happiness only by ceasing to be a queen make a satisfying end to a fine story.

**Eloise Jarvis McGraw**

*Mara, Daughter of the Nile*

Another novel of old Egypt is *Mara* (1953), which parents will probably read along with their twelve-year-olds, wondering why Hollywood has not discovered it. It is a hair-raising tale of royal intrigue, spies, and true love, in the days when a feminine Pharaoh, Hatshepsut, has usurped the throne from the rightful king. Mara is a slave who vaguely remembers better days and is determined to escape. She is bought by a mysterious man who offers her luxury if she will serve at court as a spy for the queen. She accepts, and also sells her services to a young nobleman, Lord Sheftu, as a spy for the king. Mara thinks she can play both sides for all she can get. But her love for Sheftu and a deep pity for the wronged king change her from a liar and a cheat to a selfless heroine who endures torture rather than betray her new loyalties. The action is terrifying. Detailed pictures emerge of the daily life of different classes—shopkeepers, rivermen, soldiers, slaves, and royalty. This is a picaresque thriller!

**Olivia E. Coolidge**

*Egyptian Adventures*

Although the stories in *Egyptian Adventures* (1954) are at junior high school reading level, many of them may be read aloud to

elementary school children who are having their first look at the ancient world. Mrs. Coolidge is a scholar, and in the course of these entertaining tales she gives children lively pictures of the Egyptians' superstitions and magic, harvests and hunts, festivals and funerals. The characters emerge fully drawn and colorfully alive. These twelve well-written stories will do much to develop children's feeling for the people and adventures of a far-distant past.

**Isabelle Lawrence**

*The Gift of the Golden Cup*

The time of ancient Greece and Rome is another period in history at which children in elementary school look briefly, but it is so remote from anything they know that it is generally a dull abstraction. There are only a few stories about this period, and only a few authors who can build an authentic background for the tales. Isabelle Lawrence's stories pile action upon action and intrigue upon intrigue, but her characters are exuberantly alive and entertaining. Young readers follow their adventures and emerge breathless and doubtless a bit confused, but right at home in Rome, Pompeii, or Athens.

In *The Gift of the Golden Cup* (1946) twelve-year-old Atia and her seven-year-old brother Gaius are children of the famous Roman family of Julians, with Julius Caesar for an uncle. While their parents are away from home, there is a well-organized revolt of the slaves, a terrifying experience for the children. They find themselves, after a series of misadventures, on a pirate ship, slaves of the captain. Fortunately, their captor is kind to them, and young Gaius takes to the pirates' life enthusiastically. However, both children now learn the bitterness their own slaves, some of them of noble birth, must feel. The adventures of the young Julians include sea battles, the sinking of a ship, rescue, and a long journey home with a young Roman and two slaves. Once home, the children persuade their father to free the two Greek slaves who helped them. Later the mother of the former

Illustration by Charlotte Kleinert for *Detectives in Togas* by Henry Winterfeld, Harcourt, Brace, 1956  
(book 5¼ x 8, picture 4 x 4½)

*Except for the togas, these boys might be friends of Henry Huggins or Little Eddie. Convincing realism and a cartoon-like humor make these pictures as amusing as the text of this "whodunit" in ancient Rome.*

slaves invites Atia and Gaius to visit the family in Athens. This visit provides an interesting chance to contrast Roman and Greek life. It also supplies more action and a mystery which continues in the second book, *The Theft of the Golden Ring*, an equally complex and exciting story.

Were it not for Isabelle Lawrence's ability to bring her characters vividly to life, from the irrepressible Gaius to Caesar himself, these books might be merely action-packed thrillers of small value. But besides an impressive gallery of well-drawn characters, the stories provide unforgettable pictures of Greek and Roman houses, cities, ships, clothes, food, slave conditions, patrician luxuries and obligations, the schools for the boys, and the duties of girls and women. These will remain in memory when some of the action is forgotten.

#### Henry Winterfeld *Detectives in Togas*

Although *Detectives in Togas* (1956) is frankly a juvenile "whodunit," very funny and full of suspense, it also gives an excellent picture of ancient Rome. Trouble starts in the school for patrician boys when Rufus writes on his wax tablet, "Caius is a dumbbell." Zantippus the schoolmaster punishes Rufus, but the next day the same legend, "Caius is a dumbbell," is found scrawled on

#### European historical fiction

##### Howard Pyle *Otto of the Silver Hand*

Howard Pyle was steeped in the traditions and customs of the Middle Ages. He



the walls of the Temple in Rufus' own script. Rufus convinces his friends that he did not desecrate the Temple—but who did? The boys, aided by Zantippus, set out to unravel the mystery and save Rufus. Politics and politicians are involved, and there are hairbreadth escapes, some grim and some farcical. By the time young readers finish this intriguing story they feel right at home in the ancient city and can approach their high school Latin with amusing memories. With the sleuthing boys the reader sees the crowded streets, the shops, the famous Temple, the Baths of Diana, the Forum, and the school.

Henry Winterfeld tells us that some excavations revealed a childish scrawl on the walls of a temple, "Caius asinus est" This was the inspiration for the lively story of *Detectives in Togas*.

not only wrote fascinating stories about them, but even did powerful illustrations for his own books from a storehouse of detailed and seemingly inexhaustible information. The convincing dialogue in his

tales, while not of course reproducing exactly the speech of the period, suggests it. Old speech forms and difficult words make hard reading in places but add to the flavor of the tale. His running narrative is always clear, direct, and vigorous, and how he loves fights! These range from terrible to farcical, but each story has a liberal sprinkling of them. His books are excellent to read aloud and are exciting materials on which the good readers may try their mettle.

*Otto of the Silver Hand* is a horrifying tale of the robber barons of Germany. One of these had plundered ruthlessly. For revenge, his enemies struck off the hand of his only son, the delicate Otto. Later, because of the silver substitute, the boy was known as Otto of the Silver Hand. The story presents two phases of the life of the period: the turbulent life within the castle strongholds of the robber barons and the peaceful scholarly pursuits of the monks with their great monasteries. The mutilation of the boy is gently handled; indeed the reader does not know what has happened until Otto says, "I can never climb again!" and a few pages later the author adds, "*Little Otto had but one hand.*" There are no details, only the infinite pathos of a child in the power of cruel men. Children read the book without harm and Otto is always remembered.

Pyle's *Men of Iron* is tremendously popular with boys from twelve to fourteen. The sixteen-year-old Myles Falworth is sent to be a squire to a powerful earl. There he learns that his own father is practically an outlaw, suspected of being one of the plotters against the king's life. In the earl's great castle, Myles is trained in all the intricate feats of knighthood and in the code of chivalry. His own pugnacity and refusal to knuckle under to any man get him into one fight after another. He learns eventually to bide his time with patient caution and then, when the opportunity comes, to clean up in good style. Myles is eventually knighted. He frees his father from suspicion and wins the earl's daughter for his wife. Even though the book

contains more gory fights than most girls can stomach, the boys like it. Myles has to battle with his own impulsiveness and his too-quick temper as well as with his enemies. The friendship between Myles and a fellow squire, Gascoyne, is an example of fine loyalty on both sides. This is one of the outstanding books about medieval England.

### Elizabeth Janet Gray *Adam of the Road*

Another book about the medieval period which children should not miss is the Newbery Award for 1943, Elizabeth Janet Gray's *Adam of the Road*. Elizabeth Gray has also written a distinguished series of American historical fiction and some excellent biographies (Bibliography, Chapters 16 and 18).

Elizabeth Gray is a born storyteller, although paradoxically she is weak in plot construction. Her books develop little excitement; the conflicts are mild; no breath-taking suspense leads to a smashing climax. Her stories move quietly, as life moves for most of us, full of simple pleasures—dogs, books, the out-of-door world, and, above all, people. She is a careful historian, and her tales have all the authentic minutiae of everyday life long ago which make history convincing. But chiefly she is concerned with people, so much so that she called her Newbery Award acceptance speech "History Is People." In it she said, speaking of *Adam of the Road*:

I chose the thirteenth century for the period of my tale not only because minstrelsy was then still at its height, but also because it was the century in which some of the principles we value most highly today had their inception. It began with Magna Charta and it ended with the first real English parliament, that of 1295, to which the Commons were invited as well as the nobles, the knights, and the clergy. It saw the development of the English universities, which brought with them the idea of freedom of learning, thought, and speech. It watched the building of the cathedrals with their great gifts of beauty and of unity and faith. It was a time of gaiety, of song, and story.



THE OAK TREE HOUSE WAS FINISHED

Illustration by Vera Bock for *The Oak Tree House* by Katharine Gibson, Longmans, 1943 (book  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ )

*The woodcut-style illustrations are appropriate to this quaint tale of the Middle Ages. Here the Oak Tree House is viewed with pride by the old couple, Mustard, and Madame Pepper.*

ety of medieval life—that of jugglers, minstrels, plowmen, and nobles, as real as the people today. Adam's adventures are varied and often amusing; the plot concerns merely his search for dog and father, but their reunion is tremendously satisfying. This is more than a good story. It is a complete picture of medieval life, beautifully written, with illustrations by Robert Lawson, himself a Caldecott winner. A book of distinction, both as a story and as history!

#### Marguerite de Angeli

##### *The Door in the Wall*

And I sent Adam wandering down the high-road not only because as a minstrel he could enter into all the different kinds of medieval life, the abbey, the castle, the manor house, the inn, the fair, the university, but also and even more because along the highways he would find the simple folk of England, peddler, ferryman, miller, smith, plowman, and the rest, and know their kindness, their wisdom, their strength, and their laughter.<sup>1</sup>

Her entire speech as well as May Massee's article about her<sup>2</sup> should be quoted. Look them up; they are too fine to miss.

Children from twelve to fourteen years old will find that Adam is a boy much like themselves. It just happened that he lived in the thirteenth century instead of today. Adam's two loves are his golden cocker spaniel and his minstrel father, but he loses them both for a time. How he seeks the two of them up and down the roads of old England gives children a glimpse into every vari-

Marguerite de Angeli has grown steadily in her work, both as artist and writer. From the pictures for her first little *Ted and Nima* books to the prodigal overflow of beauty in her *Mother Goose*, and from those same slight stories to her Newbery Medal book, *The Door in the Wall*, is enormous progress for one busy lifetime. And amiable, charming Mrs. de Angeli must have been busy indeed with all her books and five children. Her son's account of how the children interrupted her work is amusingly related in *Newbery Medal Books*.

*The Door in the Wall* (1949) is her first book of historical fiction. Robin's noble father is off to the wars and his mother is with the Queen when the plague strikes. Robin falls ill, unable to move his legs, and is deserted by the servants. Brother Luke finds the boy, takes him to the hospice, and cares for him. To the despairing Robin he says, "Always remember... thou hast only to follow the wall far enough and there will be a door in it." The monks teach the boy to use his hands and his head, "For reading is another door in the wall...."

<sup>1</sup>Elizabeth Janet Gray, "History Is People," *The Horn Book*, July-August 1943, p. 219.

<sup>2</sup>May Massee, "Elizabeth Janet Gray," *The Horn Book*, July-August 1943, pp. 205-216.

Robin learns to swim and to get around swiftly on his crutches, but his bent back never straightens. However, his spirit is strong, and he plays so heroic a part in saving a beleaguered city that the king honors him, and his parents are moved with joy and pride. This heart-warming story is beautifully illustrated in the author's most colorful style. The characters are less convincing than the situations, but the book is of great interest to all children, and brings special comfort to the handicapped.

**Marchette Chute**

*The Wonderful Winter*

Miss Chute is not only the author of *Shakespeare of London* and similar studies of Chaucer and Ben Jonson for adult readers, but she has also written some delightful stories for young people. *The Wonderful Winter* (1954) carries young readers straight into Shakespeare's theater with young Robin, Sir Robert Wakefield, who has escaped from an intolerable home situation. But London seems to spell starvation until he is befriended by some actors and is taken into the home of the famous John Heminges. Through the warmth and affection of this crowded house-

hold, young Robin learns to give and accept love and gaiety. Meanwhile he works and plays small parts in the theater, knows the great Shakespeare, and falls in love with *Romeo and Juliet*. When Robin returns to his castle and his duties, he is happy and confident as a result of his wonderful winter.

*The Innocent Wayfaring* is fourteenth-century England brought vividly and authentically to life. Anne is so averse to learning the arts of housewifery that she runs away from her convent school with the prioress' pet monkey for company. The monkey is responsible for her meeting Nick, a poet and a most resourceful young man. He tries to get away from her, but Anne sticks like a bur. Their adventures provide a cross section of fourteenth-century life, from encounters in seamy inns to those in manor houses. After three days Nick takes Anne back to her family with the agreement that when she has learned housewifery and he his father's business, Nick will come for her. Meanwhile, they have the memory of three enchanting days which led them back to home and responsibility.

Both books are beautifully written by a scholar who can paint a glowing background for her charming stories.

### Some criteria for historical fiction

These examples of historical fiction have certain qualities which may serve as standards by which to scrutinize other books in this field. First, they are historically accurate, not merely in the major events but also in the small details of everyday living which make the past understandable. Second, these stories so re-create the past that people, places, and problems seem almost as real to us as those we know today. Third, they tell a good story regardless of the period—a story so absorbing that the historical background and details fall into a properly secondary place and do not seem an end in themselves. Fourth, in these books the problems and difficulties of the past throw a light upon our problems today.

Looking at the past through the pages of these substantial historical stories, we discover that human nature and human aspirations remain much the same. The boy in *Adam of the Road* encountered thieves, but he also tasted the kindness of many sorts of people. The little girl, Sarah Noble, and puny young Flan endured the perils of the wilderness because it was expected of them. And the boys and girls of today would do the same. Master Simon, in the book by that title, made a garden that was an oasis of peace in a disordered world. Intolerance comes and goes; gardens remain. Johnny Tremain fought and won a personal battle against his physical handicap, but he and his friends fought also

for bigger things, outside themselves, so "that a man can stand up." In the American saga of a pioneer family, the Ingalls girls learned that love and fortitude can make homes blossom

even in the wilderness. So, in good historical fiction, the past may give us inspiration and courage and insight for dealing with the present.

## Early books about children of other lands

**H**ans Brinker and Heidi, like Tom Sawyer and Little Women, are not only among the first of the realistic books for older children but are still deservedly popular. The stories of the Dutch Hans and the Swiss Heidi give American children authentic and exciting accounts of life in foreign lands and acquaint them with children who seem as real as the children next door.

### Mary Mapes Dodge

#### Hans Brinker, or the Silver Skates

Mary Mapes Dodge is notable not only as the author of *Hans Brinker* but also as the first editor of the famous old magazine for children, *St. Nicholas* (1873). This magazine, numbering among its contributors such names as Alcott, Longfellow, Burnett, Kipling, and Whittier, is said to have marked the beginning of the Children's Age,<sup>1</sup> but Mrs. Dodge's own famous novel for children and young people certainly contributed to its propitious start. *Hans Brinker* (1865) was immediately successful. It was translated into many languages, and the Dutch people accepted it as the best picture of childhood in Holland that had ever been written.<sup>2</sup>

In this country *Hans Brinker* has remained on all good book lists, both as an exciting story and as the most authentic picture of Dutch life available, although some librarians say its popularity is beginning to wane. Mrs. Dodge had become deeply interested in the history of the Dutch Republic and had saturated herself with the best references she could find on the subject. When she began to write her book she had a twofold purpose: to tell a good story about the children of Holland and to weave into that story as much of

the history and customs of the people as she could. It is this burden of information that bogs it down here and there, or even interrupts the story entirely. For instance, the book begins with a chapter which introduces Hans and his little sister Gretel, with something of their problems. The second chapter abandons the story to give a brief history of the country. Later, the boys go on a forty-mile skating trip, and we are given brief histories of the towns they pass through, their art collections, their legends, and their heroes. The old legend of the boy holding his finger in the hole in the dike is in one of these chapters, completely interrupting the main story. Some of these digressions are interesting in themselves; others are less so; but all of them disrupt the unity of the exciting plot which Mrs. Dodge works up so successfully. If these digressions were deleted, probably the story would go right on being as popular as ever because it really is a thriller, with a competition for the wonderful silver skates and two mysteries to be solved.

Mrs. Dodge's powers of characterization are exceptional. There are eight boys and girls to be kept track of besides Hans and his sister, yet we know each one of them, his virtues and his petty or downright odious characteristics. The plot is complex, too. There is a main plot concerned with the restoring of Raff Brinker's memory and with finding both the lost money and the secret of the watch. Then there are the secondary threads of interest in the old doctor and his missing son, and finally in the competition for the skates. Mrs. Dodge vouches for the authenticity of the Raff story. Some of the other episodes seem melodramatic, like the one about the thief in the night, but not too incredible considering the date of the narrative. It

<sup>1</sup>Mahony and Whitney, *Realms of Gold*, p. 611.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 610.



Illustration by Jessie Willcox Smith for *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri, David McKay, 1922 (original in color, book 6¼ x 9)

The portraitlike quality of Jessie Willcox Smith's illustration is evident in this picture with its realistic background and static figures. Soft colors and tender interpretations are characteristic of her pictures.

of other lands through a delightful story. The popularity of *Heidi* has never diminished although some translations of it are difficult to understand. It is a long book, too, with pages of solid reading. Still, children read it, and many college students say it is one of the books they reread in childhood in spite of the fact that they belonged to the generation which also had *The Good Master* and *The Trumpeter of Krakow*.

*Heidi* uses the most popular of all themes—a variation of Cinderella, the unwanted, neglected child who comes into her own—but there is a convincing quality about *Heidi* which many of the modern Cinderellas lack. The child is full of the joy of living. She skips and leaps and she falls in love with an apparently grouchy old grandfather, the goats, and the mountains, all with equal vehemence and loyalty. When she is torn away from them by force and deception and sent to live in town as a companion to the invalid child, Clara, she suffers acutely. Still she manages to make friends, to secure kittens and a turtle for Clara, and to send out shy tendrils of affection in many directions. In the town she learns to read and gets her first religious instruction. This is of a kind that will offend no religious group today since it is built on a faith in God and on the ability to draw strength and wisdom from communion with God, in prayer and thanking. This is a deeply religious book, yet children read it all. Probably because the emphasis is reassuring, it gives both faith and hope. Homesickness for her mountains and her loved ones almost destroys Heidi, and not until she is restored to them does she recover. From the security of her life in the mountains

is, on the whole, still a lively and satisfying tale, with mysteries and suspense aplenty. The story of the boy who held his finger in the hole in the dike is neither true nor even possible. But, amusingly enough, the Dutch have finally put up a statue to this mythical character to satisfy the eager tourists who refuse to be robbed of their childhood hero. Although cutting would help the story, children have always known how to skip the dull passages. This substantial old book has provided generations of American children with a gracious introduction to the people and customs of Holland.

Johanna Spyri  
*Heidi*

*Heidi* was written in German by Mrs. Johanna Spyri, a Swiss, and translated into English (1884) soon after its publication. This book continued the fine tradition of *Hans Brinker* by introducing American children to children



she is able to reach out to the town friends and help them, too. Clara is brought to the mountains, and there the good milk from the goats, the clear, fresh air, Grandfather, and Heidi cure her. The little invalid walks for the first time in her life, and Heidi keeps her mountains and her town friends, too.

No child who has read and loved *Heidi* will ever enter Switzerland without a feeling of coming home. The incredible, rosy fire of the Alpine sunset he will see through Heidi's eyes. Every little herd of goats will set him to yearning for a bowl of the goat's milk that cured Clara and gave such bounding health and joy to Heidi. He will find himself looking, too, for the goats—Snowflake, Little Swan, and the haughty Turk—with their herdboy Peter. Nothing about Switzerland will ever seem alien to the child who has read *Heidi*. In every old man he will see Heidi's grandfather; in every village, Heidi's Dorfli. This is what books about other lands should do for children—leave them feeling forever a part of that country, forever well disposed

toward the people. In good stories of other people, they have no sense of oddity, no feeling of irreconcilable differences, but a desire to know these people so like themselves.

To accomplish this, a book about other lands must be completely authentic and sincere. *Heidi* has both these virtues because of the experiences and character of the author, Johanna Spyri. She was a doctor's daughter, greatly moved by the ill health of her father's patients. She, too, went to the mountains in the summer and lived on goat's milk, black bread, cheese, and the good, fresh butter. She, too, knew the bounding health of this free life under sunny skies, amid the great mountain peaks, and she breathed the crystal-clear air and stood breathless before the beauty of the mountain slopes covered with flowers. Nothing in the book is labored or superficial. Heidi is as wholesome and real as her mountains. Every child reading this book will wish for a bed of straw just like Heidi's, up in the loft, looking out on the mountain peaks under their glittering crown of stars.

## Recent trends in books about other lands

The nineteen twenties, which marked the growing emphasis upon the social studies as the core of the curriculum, saw also the beginning of a great influx of books about other lands. Today, an avid correlator of social studies and English can dash into any sizable library and find children's stories about almost any region, from Albania to the Congo, from Russia to the South American jungle. Indeed one student who was planning a unit on United States territories and possessions found stories for every one of them except the Virgin Islands. Today the Virgin Islands are also represented. The coverage of foreign countries by juvenile fiction is so comprehensive that it somehow suggests hasty editorial conferences devoted to such themes as: What are the new emphases in the social-studies curriculums going to be for the next year or so: Our Neighbors North and South, or East and West Forever?

Great stories, however, do not seem to roll off the assembly line according to specifications. For example, during the recent drive on good neighboring, over two hundred juvenile books about South America appeared in a space of two or three years. While many of these were good stories, there was not among them all one great and memorable book of the caliber of *Heidi* or *The Good Master* or *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*. Of course, great and memorable books are rare at best. And, of course, some of these books about other lands are up to date and authentic, but many others are superficial and do not portray foreign countries fairly or adequately.

The early books in this field had a tendency to present the picturesque at the expense of the usual. They gave us the China of bound feet, the Holland of wooden shoes and lace caps, South America by way of some primitive tribe of Indians about as typical of

modern South America as Navahos would be of the United States. Some of these faults are still to be found in our most recent books. We

must be careful to check the stories they tell with what we know to be true of the present everyday life of average people.

## Outstanding books about foreign lands

There are excellent books about both China and Japan, written by people who have lived in those countries, who know and love the people and have a story to tell. For the sixes and sevens, *Little Pear* and *Little Pear and His Friends* are prime favorites.

Eleanor Frances Lattimore  
*Little Pear*

The author and illustrator of *Little Pear*, Eleanor Frances Lattimore, has lived a good share of her life in China. In telling about the everyday ups and downs of the well-meaning but mischievous Little Pear, Miss Lattimore lets us observe an average Chinese family going about its regular duties with only an occasional festival to break the ordinary routine of life. Little Pear's antics provide some extra excitement now and then,

but they are not any more sensational than those of any American child on any pleasant suburban street. That is the charm of the *Pear* books. Houses, clothes, and foods may differ from ours, but everyday living is so usual it might be our own. One little girl said, "You know, all the time I was reading *Little Pear* I kept thinking of my little brother. He is just as mischievous as Little Pear." These stories, with an escapade to each chapter, are completely satisfying to young children. They are easy to read, and they are also delightful to read aloud. (See "Little Pear," p. 495.)

Taro Yashima  
*Crow Boy*

Also for the youngest children are Taro Yashima's striking picture-stories of his native Japan. His first book, *The Village Tree*, was the sensitively recorded play of children on and under a big tree that leaned over the water, a swimming-hole sort of place, we would say. *Plenty to Watch* by Taro and Mitsu Yashima tells of the shops and workers that Japanese children stop to watch as they walk home from school. The stores and the workers may differ from ours, but the children's insatiable curiosity about both is universal.

*Crow Boy* (1955), Taro Yashima's third book, was a runner-up for the Caldecott Medal and won the Child Study Award. It

Illustration from Eleanor Frances Lattimore's *Little Pear*, Harcourt, Brace, 1931 (book 5¼ x 8½)

Both the text and pictures of Eleanor Lattimore's *Little Pear* are enjoyed by young children. The strong, bold outlines and sparse details of this illustration contrast sharply with the complexity of the Kurt Wiese illustration from *Young Fu* (p. 456), a book popular with older children.

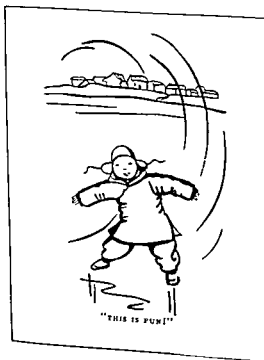


Illustration from Taro Yashima's *Crow Boy*, Viking, 1955 (original in color, book 5¼ x 8, picture 5 x 5½)

*The use of wide spaces and few details adds meaningful drama to this illustration. Notice how the two children walking chummily under one umbrella point up the loneliness of the queer, solitary figure of Crow Boy.*



has unusual social values as well as great pictorial beauty. Crow Boy is a small silent child who walks to school alone, sits alone, and does not talk. The children call him derisively "Chibi"—tiny boy. But a new schoolmaster discovers that the small outcast walks in from a great distance. He knows where wild potatoes and wild grapes grow, and he knows every call the crows make and can imitate them perfectly. When he does this for the children they call him "Crow Boy" with respect, and he is one of them at last. Not since Eleanor Estes' *The Hundred Dresses* has this theme of the outsider been so sensitively handled, and there is usually a Crow Boy or a Wanda in every classroom.

### Esther Wood

#### Silk and Satin Lane

An outstanding Chinese story for the eight to tens is Esther Wood's *Silk and Satin Lane*, a great favorite with girls. Ching-ling, an orphan, is an unwanted Chinese girl. Her brother is placed with a bachelor uncle who most decidedly does not want a girl child. Ching-ling promises to be useful and to be no bother whatever, and she is finally allowed to stay with the uncle. But she is in hot water most of the time, always through her well-meaning efforts to be helpful. She washes clothes in the canal and loses most of them. She lovingly takes the babies out of an orphanage and deposits them on various door-sills with surprising results. The uncle is to be married, and Ching-ling delivers his gifts to the wrong bride. Fortunately, the bride is an understanding girl. She makes Ching-ling her first real dress; she helps her and loves her; and Ching-ling knows at last what it is to be wanted, to have a secure place in a

family. This modest little book, a real contribution to the gallery of lovable heroines, gives young readers a sympathetic insight into Chinese life. Any book by Esther Wood is worth investigating.

### Elizabeth Foreman Lewis

#### Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze

For the oldest children there are the fine books of Elizabeth Lewis, who lived long in China and is particularly successful in interpreting China's modern transition period for young readers. *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze* (1932), which won the Newbery Medal, is the exciting story of a thirteen-year-old Chinese country boy who is brought to the rich city of Chungking and apprenticed to a skillful coppersmith. In time, Young Fu becomes a fine craftsman, but neither easily nor quickly. Meanwhile, he explores the great modern city and finds everywhere the conflict of old and new ideas—bound feet still to be seen but somewhat disapproved of, old superstitions and prejudices, frightful poverty the



The chairs having passed, the boys again fell into step

Illustration by Kurt Wiese for *Young Fu* by Elizabeth Foreman Lewis, Winston, 1932 (book 5 x 7½)

*Kurt Wiese is a remarkably versatile artist. Whether he is illustrating a "tall tale" or a story of modern-day China, he suits his pictures to the mood of the story and the age of the child for whom the book is intended.*

lot of most of the Chungking people, and the country involved in a civil war. Fu's adventures carry him into the thick of everything. He sees a poor coolie shot down by looting Chinese soldiers; he assists in detecting opium smugglers; he helps a foreign woman whose house is on fire and wins her friendship. Best of all, he becomes the humble student of a great scholar who teaches him wisdom along with the classics. Fu is no idealized hero but exhibits the usual contradictory human traits. He is brave and honest, yet he wastes his master's time and gets into trouble. He works hard, grows skulful, and then gets unbearably

cocky. He is frugal one moment and wasteful the next. The book is full of Confucian proverbs used by adults to point out to Fu the error of his ways:

*Laziness never filled a rice bowl.*

*A scholar is a treasure under any roof-tree.*

*There is no merit worthy of boasting!*

*If a man's affairs are to prosper, it is simply a matter of purpose!*

*He who rides on a tiger cannot dismount when he pleases.*

*The shallow teapot does the most spouting, and boils dry the quickest.*

Mrs. Lewis has a later book, *To Beat a Tiger* (1956), for teen-agers and young adults. It is the grim story of sixteen Chinese boys living by their wits on the outskirts of Shanghai. They all know the proverb, "To beat a tiger, one need's a brother's help." Their tiger is starvation and death, and so they lie, steal, and cheat, but share their wretched scraps of food, their hut, filthy rags, and scanty heat. Death strikes one of the gang, and the chance to rise by sheer villainy claims another. Nationalists and Communists are not named, but the two factions are there and the boys are involved. It is a complex story, but once the large gallery of characters is identified, the plot gains momentum and suspense is high. Although the picture of a country torn with civil strife is a sad one, the book ends on a hopeful note for at least three of the boys.

### Margot Benary-Isbert The Ark

*The Ark and Rowan Farm* are not so grim as Mrs. Lewis' pictures of civil war in China. Still, these books give children an impressive account of the aftereffects of war on the people, cities, and countryside of Germany, where these delightful stories were very popular.

In *The Ark* (1953) the Iechow family, a mother and four children, are trying to re-establish something approaching a normal life in a bombed-out city. The doctor father may be dead or a prisoner of war. Even so,

they waste little time lamenting the past and are grateful to obtain three unheated attic rooms from a reluctant landlady. The frail mother has a gift for homemaking, even in a freezing attic. Matthias, the fifteen-year-old boy, is a born scholar but knows he cannot go to school any more; so he works and studies at night as best he can. Margret, the next oldest, is at loose ends grieving over the death of her twin brother, a war casualty. Joey and Andrea, seven and ten, return to school reluctantly. They furnish the comedy in both books—Andrea all dramatics and Joey thoroughly enjoying his daily diggings in the rubble of the city. The family circle expands, too, to include friends and acquaintances of all the children.

The story centers on Margret, who obtains a job as kennel maid to Mrs. Almut, who has brought her farm and famous breed of Great Danes through the war with the minimum care and the maximum grit. Margret loves and nurses the dogs back into condition, serves as midwife to the stock on the farm, and even helps to restore an old railroad car, which becomes "The Ark" to shelter the whole Lechow family.

In *Rowan Farm* the father has returned, new characters are introduced, and Margret suffers the pangs of first love and jealousy. These stories are chiefly focused on the gallant struggles of one family to reestablish normal life, not only for themselves but for others more lost than they. Both are superlative stories, and through the eyes of these vividly drawn characters young readers see the rubble of bombed-out cities and the wastelands of what were once beautiful farms. They feel the discomforts of food depriva-

tions, bitter cold, and, above all, the dislocation of hopes and plans. Yet these stories are filled with minor triumphs—a birthday cake, very dry but miraculously sweet to the last unbelievable crumb, and music, which feeds the spirit and is a glorious link with the past. And every reader will understand Mrs. Lechow's courageous attempts to keep alive the precious traditions of Christmas and will rejoice when, out of cold and deprivation, she succeeds in making not merely a merry Christmas but a blessed one for her family and all those people who have come into the circle of the Lechows' energy and courage.

Mrs. Benary tells us that most of the episodes in these two books are true of someone she knew during the postwar period in Germany. In her youth novel, *Castle on the Border*, which was written in her new home in the United States, she tells a story about a hard-working group of young actors whose lives she shared for a year in postwar Germany. Whether factual or partly fictional, these books reflect Mrs. Benary's own overflowing warmth and kindness.



Illustration from Armstrong Sperry's *Call It Courage*, Macmillan, 1940 (original in two colors, book 6¼ x 8¾)

*The author's illustrations, in strong blues and white, add much to the interest of this exciting story. Here the swirling water, the suggestion of ocean bed, the lines of the great fish, the downward plunge of the figures give this battle with the shark a terrifying reality.*

**Armstrong Sperry**  
**Call It Courage**

*Call It Courage* (1940), a Newbery Medal book, is an exciting story about Mafatu, the son of a Polynesian chief, rejected by his people for his cowardice and marooned on a desert island. This island proves to be the sinister shrine of man-eaters. Mafatu maintains life, develops all the necessary arts and skills, makes his own weapons and his own canoe, finally escapes the man-eaters and returns home a hero. The book is well written and will give young readers many a spinal chill and subsequent shiver of relief. The illustrations are beautiful.

**Kate Seredy**  
**The Good Master**

*The Good Master* by Kate Seredy was an instantaneous favorite with children. If they were to be consulted, they would give this book the Newbery Medal rather than Miss Seredy's *White Stag*. *The Good Master* is the story of a Hungarian tomboy, Kate—a regular brat of a child. She is sent by her father to stay on her uncle's ranch. Her young cousin Jancsi imagines she will be a frail, dainty girl, and so he is horrified by the wild,

impish Kate. She causes a runaway of horses; she climbs the rafters and there eats sausage until she is sick; she knows how to do nothing useful and is a general pest. The gentling of Kate makes a charming story. "The Good Master" is the understanding uncle. The aunt is just as patient with Kate, and Jancsi takes a hand, too, in the girl's reformation. But it is Kate's growing love of the horses and riding, as well as her affection for her newly found relatives, that helps her learn gentler ways. Hungarian festivals and legends, the household crafts, the work of the ranch, the good food, and the warm family life add color and charm to a delightful story. The sequel to *The Good Master* is *The Singing Tree*, which sees Kate and Jancsi in their teens and the father gone to World War I. Anti-Semitism arises, but, in this story, it is happily banished. It comes perhaps too close to the didactic to be a popular story, but it is well worth reading and timely, too.

Kate Seredy, who was an illustrator before she was an author, makes her illustrations a vital part of her books. Children take one look at the colored portraits of Kate and Jancsi at the beginning of *The Good Master* and wish to read the book immediately. In spite of the Hungarian clothes, these might be the children next door. These frank, look-you-in-the-eye children have fine heads, broad brows, and strongly modeled faces; Kate, with her dark blue eyes and saucy turned-up nose, is particularly appealing. But throughout the books it is the movement in the pictures that holds the children. Kate Seredy draws splendid horses whose flashing legs you can almost see on the gallop, swirling skirts that make a dance come to life on the page,



Illustration from Kate Seredy's *The Good Master*, Viking, 1944 (book 6 x 8)

Kate Seredy has a special gift for depicting action, in her human figures as well as in the horses she draws so magnificently. Here Kate's flying braids, the tilt of the two figures, and the flowing lines of their pleated skirts give a sense of the movement of the chase.

fairies that soar, dogs bounding or alert, and heroes who stride over the earth in power and might. These drawings of Miss Seredy's are alive with action and interpret the mood of the tale or the very essence of a character, whether a dog or horse or a human being. Children will try any book having Miss Seredy's illustrations. These are full of gaiety, vigorous action, and sheer beauty.

### Monica Shannon

#### Dobry

One of the greatest children's books about people of other countries is Monica Shannon's *Dobry*, Newbery Medal winner for 1935. Because this book is not immediately popular with children, it needs some help from adults in promoting it. Read it aloud, discuss and savor the colorful episodes. The Bulgarian Christmas celebration, climaxing in Dobry's fine snow carving of the Nativity, is a beautiful excerpt to read aloud for Christmas, and the book is too fine to lose.

Dobry is a Bulgarian peasant boy whose family has been at work on the land for generations and who finds himself both longing to stay at home and also to go away to become a sculptor. His mother is frightened and disappointed that he should think of anything but the land. The old grandfather, a remarkable character, believes that there lives in every human being "a spark of God" and only when that burns clear does life have any value. Even the mother comes to see, at last, that Dobry's spark belongs not to the land but to the re-creation of beauty.

Here is a picture of Bulgarian peasants, living close to the earth and never forgetting to enjoy the flavor of their juicy tomatoes, brown crusty loaves of bread, little sour-dough cakes with cheese melting richly in the center, good buttermilk, and special treats of Turkish coffee, black and flavorful. The coming of the gypsies with their massaging bear, the snow-melting contest which lusty old Grandfather wins, the diving into the icy river for the crucifix on a cold St. John the Baptist Day, and the everyday work make this

story of a boy's choice of his life's work a picture of rich living. Help children to discover this book, children twelve to sixteen. Not all of them will like it, but many will. We who guide children should remember Grandfather's philosophy:

... "Everything is different, each leaf if you really look. There is no leaf exactly like that one in the whole world. Every stone is different. No other stone exactly like it. That is it, Dobry. God loves variety. ... He makes a beautiful thing and nothing else in the whole world is exactly like it. ... In odd days like these ... people study how to be all alike instead of how to be as different as they really are."

### James Ramsey Ullman

#### Banner in the Sky

Published in 1954, this book about Switzerland by the author of the adult novel, *The White Tower*, gives children a dramatic story of self-discipline and the stern code of ethics that governs the famous guides of the Alps. Rudi is the son of the greatest of these guides. His father, Josef Matt, gave his life for the men in his care in their unsuccessful attempt to scale the Citadel. Since then, the guides of Kurtal have decided the mountain cannot be climbed. But brash young Rudi is determined that some day he is going to conquer the great peak and put his father's red shirt at the top of it. The story tells of Rudi's training, his mistakes, discouragement, and stubborn determination. When a party finally sets off, young Rudi is along, a sternly disciplined climber, well aware of his obligations. The suspense grows with the inclusion in the party of a treacherous guide from another village. In the end, Rudi is called upon to make the greatest sacrifice to duty that a guide can. He yields his chance of success to save a life. But in spite of this, his father's red shirt flies from the peak of the Citadel at last.

For young outdoor enthusiasts, this combination of meticulous training and thrilling action provides a wonderful story. The descriptions of the great peaks and the emphasis on character make it a book to grow on.



Meindert DeJong  
The Wheel on the School

*The Wheel on the School* (1954), a tenderly told story which won the Newbery Medal, gives a remarkably detailed picture of life in a Dutch fishing village and also has unusual social values. The story begins in the tiny village school, when Lina, the only girl, asks, "Do you know about storks?" This leads to more questions, "Why are there no storks in Shora?" and "How can we bring them back?" These two questions launch a series of activities that begin with the six children and the schoolmaster but presently draw into the circle every person in the village, including the fishermen fathers, and a good many people from other villages. The boys perform miracles of hard work and persuasion. Plucky little Lina nearly loses her life, but never her courage. Everything is ready when a terrible storm kills or drives off course hundreds of the birds. But at last the storks do settle in Shora again.

Although the book is too long for its story, it reads aloud wonderfully and will promote plenty of discussions about the people, the lovely, lonely land of sea and sky that is Holland, and the wonder of those great birds that fly home all the way from Africa. For Meindert DeJong has the gift of wonder and delight. Read his Newbery acceptance speech and know something of the rich inner life of this man who approaches children so reverently. His *Dirk's Dog*, *Bello* is a fine story of a Dutch boy's love for his dog. *Smoke above the Lane* is the gentle, humorous story

Illustration by Maurice Sendak for *The Wheel on the School* by Meindert DeJong, Harper, 1954 (book 5 x 7 1/4, picture 3 3/4 x 2 1/4)

*Lina and the boys bear the old invalid. See page 21 for other examples of Sendak's work.*

of a tramp and a little skunk. Whatever the outward action of Mr. DeJong's tales may be, it is the inner grace of his children and animals that moves every reader, young or old.

This sampling of stories about peoples of other lands demonstrates certain criteria for such books. First, children should be able to identify themselves wholeheartedly with the hero or heroine. Certainly any little girl would like to be Atia or Mara or Kate or Lina. And every boy will, as he reads, suffer the ups and downs of Chinese Fu or Swiss Rudi or Hungarian Jancsi, and share their successes with pride. These books show the everyday life of work and responsibility that is the lot of most people everywhere—celebrations are only occasional. And finally, although these books induct the reader into the unique character of the national life, they show people more like us than different, with similar needs, strengths, and weaknesses.

Because books about other lands and historical fiction may so obviously enrich social studies in the schools, there may be a tendency to use them with too heavy an emphasis on their social implications. *The Wheel on the School* pictures village-wide coöperation finally, but it is also the story of children with a wonderful idea continually frustrated just because they are children. The chief interest in *Wind in the Chimney* is not the life and customs of Pennsylvanians in the days of George Washington, but the story of how Debby and her family manage to buy their beloved house. *The Gift of the Golden Cup* contrasts Greek and Roman life and demonstrates the evils of slavery. But it is primarily a rousing adventure story of revolt, pirates, and mystery. So these books, rich with historical and modern social values, are entertaining stories, as well as good literature.



All children are interested in animals. As babies they follow them with their eyes, they reach out to them, and after they have said "ma ma" and "da da" they may burst forth with "doggy" or "kitty." Rhymes about "The Three Little Kittens" or the mouse that ran up the clock are early favorites. *Mother Goose* is supplemented by the more realistic animal picture books, first in linen or heavy paper and later in well-bound editions. With these picture books, children learn to name every beast under the sun from hippopotamuses to anteaters. The folk tales with animal heroes come next and seem never to wear out their welcome. "The Three Little Pigs," "The Little Red Hen," and all the other favorites are heard over and over with endless satisfaction.

From these, children progress to the more complex, realistic stories about animals, and for most people the interest lasts a lifetime. Witness the tremendous popularity, both in book form and in the films, of such animal stories as *Lassie Come Home* and *My Friend*



Illustration from John and Jean George's *Masked Prowler*, Dutton, 1950 (book 5½ x 7½)

*In all the books by this remarkable husband and wife team of naturalists, Jean George's pictures invariably capture the wildness and wariness of forest creatures. With a few brush strokes she makes them so real you imagine that bone and sinew lie under their fur.*

*The beauty of the wilderness is suggested as well.*

Flicka. Ernest Thompson Seton probably launched this favorite type of story with his *Lives of the Hunted* and other animal sagas. Certainly in recent years the influx of animal

stories has grown steadily both in numbers and in quality. Today there are so many fine books in this field that they are worth serious consideration.

## Talking beasts—ourselves in fur

Animal stories fall into three distinct groups. The oldest type is the folk tale (talking beast) in which the animals are given the characteristics of human beings—they are ourselves in fur. These stories are completely unscientific. "Little Pig" belongs to no Poland China nor any other swine species. He is called Pig, but he is really our industrious and capable selves, triumphing over every difficulty. So in the modern talking-beast stories, *Peter Rabbit* (p. 327), irresponsible and mischievous, is a four-footed Andrewske or a Little Pear or a Johnny Jenks next-door, always in hot water. The animals in *The Wind in the Willows* (p. 328) are more like our neighbors than they are like moles and toads and river rats. Toad is the spit and image of some vacuous and reckless young playboy, and Ratty is the Good Samaritan, the guardian angel which such young scamps seem always to acquire.

There is a great variety to these animal take-offs on human behavior. Some of them are close to fables. *Ping* shows children that home is best even with a spank—a four-year-old moral without any moralizing. In *Rabbit Hill* (p. 333), pompous Father Rabbit, worrying Mother, and suspicious, complaining Uncle Analdas are thoroughly entertaining—and they are also satires on types of people we have known. The same characters in *The Tough Winter* reveal the helplessness of creatures in the grip of natural forces more effectively than a factual account could do.

From the talking tortoise and Balaam's ass to Mickey Mouse, these unscientific talking-beast tales have had a long life. Why have they lasted, and why does the stream of new ones continue? Apparently it is the fun of their exaggerated pictures of human foibles. Donald Duck, with his hoarse roarings, is so

ridiculously like someone we know that he makes us chuckle. Or the timid seventh duck in *Seven Diving Ducks* makes the timid child feel brave by comparison, and he is consoled.

In the chapters on the old folk tales, the fables, and the modern fanciful tales, many of the talking-beast stories have already been reviewed. A few more examples of the type, then, will suffice—Inez Hogan's little animal fable, and two unusual talking-beast stories: Toba Sojo's *The Animal Frolic* and Munro Leaf's *The Story of Ferdinand*.

### Toba Sojo

#### The Animal Frolic

If you have a chance to share with children that collector's item, *The Animal Frolic* (1954), you will doubly enjoy some of the most subtle and beautiful satires on human behavior you have ever seen. The book is a reproduction of a twelfth-century scroll by a famous Japanese artist. Here is the officious rabbit as chairman of the hospitality committee and master of ceremonies. The text does not say so, but he must be, because throughout this animal picnic he welcomes, bosses, organizes, interferes, and decides. Contests are set up to choose the king of the picnic. Evidently beauty queens had not yet disturbed the eyesight of twelfth-century Japan. Some of the contests are fair and square, but the frog wins on an undetected foul. He bites the rabbit's ears and hangs on. However, he does make a very decent king, after all. The text is so slight that children can make up their own interpretations of what is happening. And the droll antics of the animals in these matchless pictures will delight both children and adults.

Illustration from *Mary and Conrad Buff's  
Hurry, Skurry, and Flurry*, Viking, 1954  
(book 6½ x 10, picture 4¼ x 3½)

*Three new-born baby squirrels nestle against  
their mother, whose alert eyes keep good guard.*

*Conrad Buff is masterful in his portrayal  
of wildlife, and he is a well-known  
landscape artist as well.*



### Inez Hogan

#### The Bear Twins

Inez Hogan has a whole series of pleasant little animal stories devoted to the kind of semihumorous moralizing used in *The Run-away Bunny* (p. 335). The first of the series, *The Bear Twins*, remains a favorite. These two roly-poly cubs disobey Mother and go off into the forest alone. All sorts of misadventures and narrow escapes convince them that, after all, Mother probably knows best. Every book in the twin series carries a similar moral, disarmingly emphasized in the pictures.

### Munro Leaf

#### The Story of Ferdinand

No adult ever forgets his first surprised examination of the small pink book bearing the picture of a mild-looking bull and the title *The Story of Ferdinand*. As one adult remarked after its sensational rise to fame, "It's the kind of book that succeeds from the nursery to the night club." Munro Leaf's brief, succinct text, together with some of Robert Lawson's finest drawings, achieves a droll perfection that is hard to account for.

Ferdinand, the peaceful bull, accidentally sits down on a bee, is stung into wild action, and is mistaken for the "fightingest" bull of the whole countryside. He is carted off to the city for a bullfight, but once in the arena he merely returns to his favorite occupation,

smelling flowers, and so is ignominiously sent back to his field.

Why does this small tale carry such a prolonged chuckle? First, it has a genuinely funny situation: peaceful Ferdinand cast in the rôle of a frightful monster! What will he do? To the philosophic, Ferdinand's plight may suggest amusing human parallels. Probably every adult has at one time or another found himself in the thick of some battle for which he was never intended; some awful committee he should never have been put on; some exalted public task he is supposed to work at brilliantly when all he really wants is a little spare time to go his own way and sniff peacefully at such fine flowers of leisure as life affords. So grown-ups, identifying themselves with the absurdly miscast Ferdinand, are very much amused with his tribulations. But children like this story, too, and laugh at it from nursery school on. The youngest take it literally. They say gravely, "Did the bee hurt Ferdinand?" Then, when the pictures show him leaping around wildly, they look a bit anxious and are relieved when Ferdinand is shown going his own peaceful way again. Older children are entranced by the drawings and they catch the fine humor of the text. Most of all, they revel in Ferdinand's predicament.

### Animals as animals but talking

The second type of animal story is a paradox. In these tales the animals are scien-

tifically true to their species, but they are given the human attributes of thoughts and

He planted himself in the center of the road, raised one hand to stop the traffic, and then beckoned with the other, the way policemen do, for Mrs. Mallard to cross over

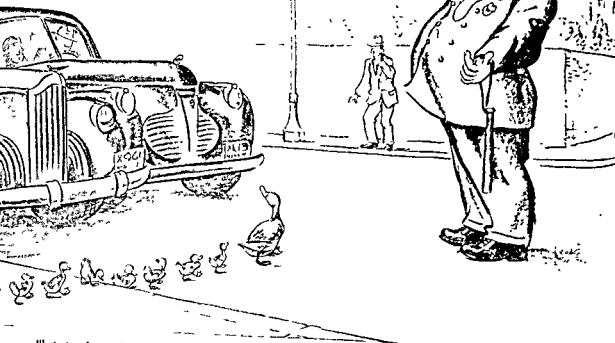


Illustration from Robert McCloskey's *Make Way for Ducklings*, Viking, 1941 (book 9 x 12)

*The realistic details in Robert McCloskey's illustrations are always good for an appreciative chuckle. Michael, the policeman, rises to the emergency, and the ducks are safely conducted across the street.*

speech The boy Mowgli, in the *Jungle Books* (p. 465), first learns the language of each kind of animal; then he converses with his four-footed friends much as he might talk with his parents. But Bear always advises from the standpoint of bear experience, and Panther from panther experience. Kaa, the snake, the feared outsider of the animal world, is to be consulted only under necessity, with his wiles kept continually in mind. In *Bambi* (p. 466), the deer thinks and speaks only of deer matters, never of human. Except that we are told the thoughts of the animals, the story is scientifically true to deer life and to the lives of the other creatures.

This is a difficult type of story to tell convincingly, for it is very easy to sentimentalize or humanize the animals falsely. But if these

stories are honestly and scrupulously written, they are good for children to have. Told from the standpoint of the animal, they dramatize the creature and point up his hardships, his fears, and his tragedies. The children gain from such stories a closer kinship with animals, more tenderness for them, and a greater desire to help them.

Hans Christian Andersen's "Ugly Duckling" (p. 311) is generally classified as an allegory, but it is also an admirable early example of this type of animal tale. The young swan, in a barnyard full of cackling hens, chickens, ducks, and turkeys, is confronted with the problems of being a swan. He is rejected because he is different; he suffers the perils of being outcast and alone; he yearns to belong to his own kind without

knowing why; and when his maturity is accomplished, he is welcomed by the swans to whom he belongs. This is an allegory, but it is also the story of a swan, scientifically true to its species except that we know what he thinks and says.

Of course, children have always thought of their pets' noises as talk. "Soot says he is hungry," they interpret helpfully when the dog barks. And this is good, because it means they are developing a sensitivity to the needs of animals and their helpless suffering when they are neglected or mistreated. These talking-beast tales which are also authentic animal lore speak for the vulnerability of all animals—the fear of the hunted creature as well as the joy of the pet in the companionship of his beloved master.

**Anna Sewell**  
*Black Beauty*

In contrast to "The Ugly Duckling," there is that old animal classic, *Black Beauty*, by Anna Sewell, first published in 1877. It enjoyed tremendous popularity for many years. Some children wept over Beauty's sufferings and were never thereafter able to ride or drive a horse without being haunted by its probable agonies of mind or body. They would be sure the harness was too tight here, or galled it there, or that their attenuated persons were too hefty for so delicate and sensitive a beast to carry. Only parents with a sense of humor could laugh and persuade them out of *Black Beauty* vapors.

*Black Beauty* was written as a protest against the tight checkrein and other more serious cruelties to horses. It relates, in the first person, a good story of the ups and downs of a carriage horse. *Black Beauty* tells us about her childhood, her training, the mishaps that overtook her at the hands of a young and inexperienced groom in a fine stable, and the praise and affection she received in her happy years. Then things go wrong. *Black Beauty* is sold farther and farther down the horse social scale. People inexperienced with horses handle her; she is

whipped, abused, underfed, and neglected. She is made to haul loads far too heavy for her, until finally she collapses in the street. Through a series of happy accidents she falls into the hands of Joe, the now prosperous man who as an unskilled groom almost killed her. He makes amends to the old horse for all she has suffered, and *Beauty* lives in clover ever after.

This story sounds all right, yet *Black Beauty* is little read today and rarely listed in careful bibliographies in spite of new and beautiful editions of it. One reason is that *Black Beauty*, while presumably a real horse, thinks and talks out of horse character. She is humanly sensitive to the social and moral tone of the people with whom she lives. Her social judgments are those of a genteel lady. She is ultraconservative about such habits as smoking, of which she heartily disapproves. Bad language, dirty clothes, the smell of liquor, and, no doubt, halitosis offend her refined sensibilities—not as a horse, which might associate these things with cruel treatment, but as a perfect Victorian lady. *Black Beauty* is so full of human proprieties that she ceases to be convincing as a horse. The story is also morbidly sad, but so are many other animal tales. It is the sentimentality and the overhumanizing of the species that make *Black Beauty* less convincing than many of our modern animal tales. As better horse stories appeared, children took them in place of *Black Beauty*, and adults ceased listing the book because it is less horse story than propaganda about horses.

**Rudyard Kipling**  
*Jungle Books*

The greatness of Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Books* lies in part in his scrupulous avoidance of this temptation to overly humanize the animals. Mowgli, the human baby, is raised by the wolves and vouched for by them at the council rock. Later he is repudiated by his foster brothers because he is not wolf. They remain true to their wolfishness, knowing that Mowgli can never be one with them

nor they with him. Thereafter Mowgli hunts alone. Another example from these stories of the way Kipling scrupulously reveals the nature of the animal and never permits sentimentality to mar the picture is "Kaa's Hunting." Usually the animals avoid the great snake, Kaa, as far as they are able. They know his wiles and have a healthy respect for his powers, but when Mowgli is stolen by the irresponsible monkeys, his protectors, the Bear and the Panther, have to summon Kaa to help them. He graciously consents, only because of the prospect of a delectable feast on the silly monkeys. All goes well. Mowgli is released, but before he and his protectors can depart, Kaa has begun his dance before the monkeys. Spellbound, they watch him, and spellbound, the Bear and Panther watch also. Mowgli has to bring them out of their trance and get them away, or they, too, like the helpless monkeys, would soon find themselves a part of Kaa's feast.

It would have been easy for a less skillful writer to have made Kaa altruistic, or at least temporarily loyal to his friends of the hunt, but Kipling knew his jungle animals too well and was too scrupulous an author to make any such mistakes. It is for these reasons, as well as for the exciting episodes in the stories and for their powerful imaginative appeal, that no recent books ever displace the *Jungle Books*. They point no moral; they advance no propaganda for or against anything; and the animals are never overly humanized. Children get from these stories an insight into wild-animal nature, into the curious likeness of animals and humans, and into the still more curious lines of demarcation.

Felix Salten

Bambi

Bambi's Children

*Bambi* and *Bambi's Children* by Felix Salten are also fine animal stories. Bambi is a deer, and we follow him from his first day of life in a little forest glade to the absentee parenthood of the mature male deer. The books are exquisitely written and the animals

well characterized. They are all there, from little field mice and rabbits to foxes and great elk. There is also "He," the enemy of all the forest creatures. His scent carries terror; his pale, hairless face chills them with horror because just beneath it are "legs" which reach out with a stick and the stick shoots fire and death far beyond its reach. *Bambi* tells a story of man's hunting from the standpoint of the hunted and is therefore desperately tragic in places. The account of the hunters encircling the animals and then beating them from their hiding places with terrible noises and constant shooting is so horrible it should make readers hate this barbarous practice. Fortunately, the larger proportion of the two *Bambi* books has to do with the training of the young deer, with the relationship of the males and females in the organization of the herd, and with some of the idyllic qualities of forest life as well as with the hard struggle for existence in the winter months. Older children twelve to fourteen can read these books, but younger children enjoy hearing them, too.

Jane Tompkins

Polar Bear Twins

*Polar Bear Twins* by Jane Tompkins is an excellent example of the realistic interpretation of arctic animals. Good readers of eight or ten enjoy it, but slow readers of twelve like it, too, because of the content and quality of the story. It is not only scrupulously true to polar bear life and nature, but it is as appealing a record of animal motherhood and cub training as there is. The cubs lack nothing of comfort in the warmth and protection of their mother's big furry body and in the loving solicitude with which she guards and feeds them. Although they learn to swim and to catch and kill seals, they get lost and are carried out to sea on a floe. Their mother's search for them is a long and anxious one, but ends happily:

Quickly she swam to the ice, and drew her huge body up out of the water. At first she did not see the twins. Then, following the scent,

she came upon her babies in the darkness. There were Fluffy and Tuffy huddled together in the lee of a big snow-drift. They were asleep. The mother gave a great cry of joy. Fondly she pressed her nose into their fur and examined them to see if they had been hurt. . . .

And when the pale moon rose, it looked down on two little white bears and a great big bear, snuggled close together, fast asleep.

#### Alice Crew Gall and Fleming Crew The Tail Books

The *Tail* books by Alice Crew Gall and Fleming Crew are an important contribution to animal stories. The first of the series, *Wagtail*, is the story of pond life, told from the standpoint of a polliwog. Wagtail's universe is the Blue Pool and the bordering banks, where he must learn to distinguish between friends and foes. Once Wagtail has achieved legs, the old Patriarch frog teaches him the basic law of his kind, which is to jump first at the sight of a strange creature and find out about him afterward. Wagtail remembers this advice when he is idly wondering about an approaching heron.<sup>1</sup> He jumps just as the heron opens his mouth to catch the frog—"another second would have been too late." Decidedly, action is the thing. From the friendly woodchuck, he learns a strange fact: the Blue Pool is not there in the cold months. It is gone completely; only white snow is

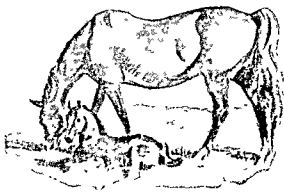
everywhere. This is baffling, particularly since the Patriarch has told Wagtail about their long winter sleep, buried in mud at the bottom of the pond. But Wagtail is no introspective brooder. He is too busy leaping for life, liberty, and the pursuit of food. The pond is teeming with dangers and satisfactions. After all, the Patriarch has survived, and so, too, Wagtail feels, will he. The Patriarch hints very gently of a still longer sleep, a sleep from which some warm spring the old frog will not return, and Wagtail will take his place on the old log and be the new Patriarch. This, too, is baffling, but something to be accepted without anxiety. Meanwhile, the sun shines hot and comforting on Wagtail's back, and the pond is clear and blue. Frog life is good, despite these mysteries.

The authors carry on a meticulous research before they begin to write their stories, and all of their facts are carefully checked by responsible scientists before the books appear. Whether it is *Ringtail* the raccoon or *Flat Tail* the beaver, these talking-beast stories are true to the species and delightful tales besides. Children enjoy hearing the stories. They are easily read by most ten-year-olds, but they appeal to children as young as seven and as old as eleven or twelve. Each book develops a clear understanding of a particular species and also a sympathetic insight into the creature's peculiar difficulties and ways of life. The problem of death, which is met gently but frankly, is particularly well dealt with for younger children. (See "Flight," p. 502.)

<sup>1</sup>See "The Sandhill Crane," p. 153 in this text.

Illustration by Wesley Dennis for *King of the Wind*  
by Marguerite Henry, Rand McNally, 1948  
(book 6½ x 9¼, picture 2¾ x 2¼)

The artist's love for and knowledge of fine horses shows in every line of his horse pictures. Here a handsome mare guards her foal. And even in the lines of that coltish body, we see, in the alert ears and proud lift of the head, the makings of a great horse.



Following the *Bambi* and the *Tail* books, there were no outstanding contributions to this particular type of animal story until E. B. White wrote *Charlotte's Web* (p. 461). In that story the reader knows what the animals say, thanks to Fern, yet each animal remains true to his species. Wilbur, the silly little pig, fights death in every way he knows.

## Animals as animals objectively reported

The third type of animal story is the one told strictly from observation, with scrupulous fidelity to all the modern knowledge of a species. It may deal with animals by themselves in their own world, as reliable observers have seen them, holding their own against their particular enemies and solving their own problems. Or it may deal with human beings and animals together. In this case the animals are most frequently pets—dogs, kittens, or horses—recorded objectively as human beings see them. The animals are permitted no thoughts, except as people guess at them, and no language other than the

Templeton, the rat, fattens happily on the rich garbage of the county fair. And Charlotte, the spider, dies according to the biological laws of her species. The humor and sadness of the barnyard animals and the matchless dialogue of both animals and people make this book a distinguished contribution to children's literature.

barks or purrs or exuberant cavortings appropriate to their kind.

Such stories are appearing in increasing numbers and are on the whole the most popular of all types of animal books with the average child past seven or eight. In these stories he finds himself a spectator in a humorous or tragic or dramatic series of events whose import he cannot always fathom. He finds himself looking in on an unfamiliar world, enough like his own so that it rouses his curiosity and sympathy but so strange that he cannot predict what will happen. He knows the mother creature will defend her young at the risk of her life, even as the human mother will, but the animal mother's means of defense will be strange to him and her defeat or triumph uncertain. He tries to guess at what his dog is pleading with him to do, but he may not guess right and so may blunder on a happy or a tragic solution of the dog's difficulty. It is the element of uncertainty in these highly objective modern animal tales that makes them more convincing and more exciting than other types. If such stories are genuinely true to animal na-



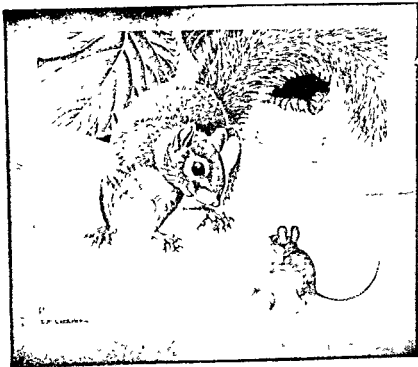
Illustration by N. C. Wyeth for *The Yearling* by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, Scribner, 1939 (original in color, book 6½ x 9)

*Jody watches the storm. Throughout the pictures Wyeth made for this book the quality of light is almost incandescent. Notice how the lashing storm is emphasized by the dark frame of the barn and the boy's tense figure.*



Illustration from  
Dorothy P. Lathrop's *Who  
Goes There?* Macmillan, 1935  
(book 9¼ x 8)

*No modern artist can  
draw the small, furry creatures  
of field and forest more  
exquisitely than  
Dorothy Lathrop. Beautiful  
in composition,  
in line and balance, in  
the fidelity of every  
detail, her pictures arouse  
in the observer a feeling for  
the spirit and beauty  
of these small animals*



ture and abilities, they constitute a fine source both of enlightenment and entertainment for the modern child, especially the city-reared child.

Such stories are rolling off the printing presses and into the films in large numbers and apparently find a juvenile and an adult following in both forms. For a successful story about a dog or a horse, emotional appeal is apparently all that is needed. The story may be well or crudely written, but given enough heart throbs it will succeed. As a matter of fact most people find that once they become interested in the wrongs suffered by some appealing four-footed hero, their critical minds close to the technical flaws in the book, and they race along pell-mell looking for the moment when the obtuse human beings in the story will finally become aware of the animal's plight and give the beast the kind of happiness he deserves. These stories reek with tragedy. They are so cruelly sad that in order to survive many of them at a time, the tender-hearted reader is reduced either to skipping or to becoming sadistically calloused. Whether it is *Lassie*

*Come Home or My Friend Flicka or Smoky or The Yearling*, feelings are harrowed to the breaking point. Children love these stories, but one thing is clear: sad, sad animal epics should not be administered in large doses. Deal them out sparingly between happier tales.

**Dorothy Lathrop**  
*Who Goes There?*  
*Hide and Go Seek*

To begin on a lighter note, there are some outstanding picture books designed for the youngest child which give equal delight to adults and to all ages in between. Dorothy Lathrop's *Who Goes There?* pictures in exquisite drawings the small creatures who come to eat the food left for them in the snowy forest. Chipmunks, red squirrels, gray squirrels, rabbits, field mice, a crow, a porcupine, and even flying squirrels come to the feast. By way of an index, their tracks are recorded behind each animal. Here is a book to take out and look at again every winter. Children who study these pictures will know these animals intimately. In *Hide and Go Seek*,

Miss Lathrop has drawn the flying squirrels from birth to maturity, in every type of activity, until this tiny nocturnal animal is as familiar as a pet dog. One teacher, never having seen flying squirrels in the flesh, knew them instantly from these pictures when they began to come and go on her window sill after dusk, for all the world like small flashes of furry lightning. In time, the food and quiet allayed their fears and she could observe how truly Miss Lathrop had recorded her own living models. Miss Lathrop's art has already been discussed (p. 171), but nowhere is it finer than in these two books.

**E. Boyd Smith**  
*Chicken World*

An old picture book that should never have gone out of print is E. Boyd Smith's *Chicken World*. It should be chosen to introduce every city child to domestic fowls. In brilliant colors, the old rooster struts proudly with every fiery feather shining. The hens are soft,



motherly creatures with their fluffy chickens to train and guard. Ducks and turkeys add variety, but interest centers on the chicken family, which is carried through perils and escapes. Along the border of each colorful page, flowers, fruits, or vegetables mark off the succeeding months. Here information and beauty go hand in hand.

**Mary and Conrad Buff**  
*Dash and Dart*  
*Hurry, Skurry, and Flurry*

Two animal picture-stories for young connoisseurs are the beautiful *Dash and Dart* and *Hurry, Skurry, and Flurry*. Conrad Buff's illustrations for *Dancing Cloud* and the other Indian stories are fine indeed in color and composition, but the fawn twins and the frolicking squirrels are sheer poetry. For both books Mrs. Buff has written a simple, cadenced text that relates the events in the first year of the creatures' lives. The pictures are forest magic, and the rhythmic texts read aloud so beautifully that children ask for them over and over again. These books, *Who Goes There? Hide and Go Seek, Chicken World, Dash and Dart, and Hurry, Skurry, and Flurry*, tell no extended stories but furnish an invaluable background of beauty and sympathetic understanding for the more complex animal stories to come.

**Marjorie Flack**  
*The Angus books*  
*The Story about Ping*

Realistic animal stories for the youngest children are on the whole a cheerful group containing some excellent pictures and some of

Illustration from Mary and Conrad Buff's *Dash and Dart*, Viking, 1942 (original in brown, book 6½ x 10)

Conrad Buff's septa pictures of the deer in their forest home are full of grace and interpretative values. In this picture, which has the decorative quality of a Japanese print, you can see the thin-haired creatures flinching under the cold, wet snow.

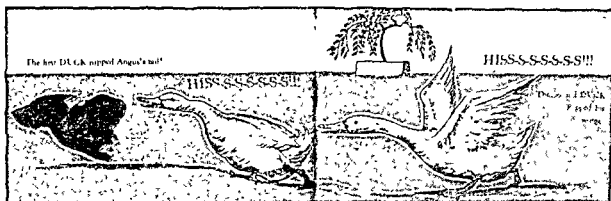


Illustration from Marjorie Flack's *Angus and the Ducks*, Doubleday, Doran, 1943 (original in color, book 9 1/2 x 6 1/4)

*Good action, decorative contrast, a well-composed and completely understandable picture, uncluttered by any distracting details! No wonder children four to eight enjoy Marjorie Flack's picture-stories.*

the children's favorite tales. Preëminent among these are the dog stories of Marjorie Flack.

Nursery classics in everything except age, the *Angus* books are worn to shreds by athletic young devotees of four or five. *Angus and the Ducks*, the first of the series, is typical. Angus is a small Scotch terrier with a large bump of curiosity. Even as he dozes on or under his favorite sofa he wishes to get out and discover things for himself. One day his chance comes. He runs out the open door through the hedge into the next garden. There he encounters some strange creatures who go "Quack, quack, quack." He barks at them and they run away. This is very satisfactory to Angus, and he feels well pleased with himself. He explores the ducks' territory, but suddenly they turn on him, both of them, and, with a terrible "ssing" and flapping of wings, they chase him through the garden and through the hedge back to his own house. There the terrified Scottie takes refuge under the sofa and forgets to be curious for all of three minutes. A simple enough narrative, you may think, but just try to do something like it. In that one word *curiosity* Miss Flack suggests the "problem." You know that, sure as fate, Angus' curiosity is going to get him into trouble. Then there is the open door, and the action starts! Angus goes from one wild

triumph to another. The ducks go into a huddle—suspense! Then come retribution for the curious Angus and a brief pause for repentance along with a subtle suggestion that there is more trouble ahead for another day. *Angus and the Cat* came next and is almost equally satisfying. Here at the simplest level are all the elements of a good plot—a problem, action, and (in most of Miss Flack's books) a surprising and humorous climax and conclusion. The children never fail to chuckle no matter how often they hear these stories and see the droll pictures.

*The Story About Ping*, with pictures by Kurt Wiese, carries the children to China, and so it is generally allocated to the sixes and sevens, although the fours enjoy it thoroughly. Ping is a duck, a youthful member of a large duck family living on a boat in the Yangtze River. In the morning all the ducks walk down a little gangplank and go swimming in the river. Toward evening they return to their boat, and the last duck to waddle up the gangplank always gets a little spank from a small switch. Ping, returning late one evening, decides that he won't submit to this spank, and so he hides in the rushes all night. The next day all sorts of things happen to him. Finally, he is captured by a strange family which intends to cook him, but a kind-hearted boy sets him free



Bulch and Brenda

Ping hastily returns to his own family. Home and security, even with a spank, look good to the adventurous young duck after the dangers he has endured.

The story is told with a directness that makes ducks on the Yangtze River as understandable and homey as ducks on the local duck pond, and the prodigal Ping receiving his spank gratefully is an amusing final touch. No need to moralize. "Home's best after all" is written all over Ping's contented acceptance of the family pattern. Kurt Wiese's pictures add to the fun of the story.

Marjorie Flack's *Wag-Tail Bess*, *Topsy*, and *Tim Tadpole and the Great Bullfrog* are not pure unadulterated realism, because we are allowed to know each creature's thoughts and motives. But this deviation is too slight at the four-year-old level to quibble over. These are real animals in an everyday world, having adventures according to their species and living lives characteristic of pet

Illustration from *Clare Turley Newberry's April's Kittens*, Harper, 1940 (book 8¼ x 10½)

*Clare Newberry is famous for her cats. She gets almost a tactile quality of fur into her sketches; and her studies of feline movement, posture, and expression are unexcelled. Her cats are always well fed and sleek, distinctly privileged cats.*

dogs or Chinese ducks or tadpoles or turtles. The books are good realism and good stories.

### Clare Turley Newberry

Mittens

Babette

Barkis

Percy, Polly, and Pete

Clare Turley Newberry's little books have no importance as literature, but as exquisite picture books for the youngest they are unexcelled. Her cats have a fluffy, furry look that fairly tempts you to touch them, and so have the woolly snowsuits and the hair of the children. There is a softness, a rotundity, and a depth of textures in her pictures to which children and adults respond with equal delight. These pictures are made by a person who loves the feel of pussies, puppies, and babies. She draws them as lovingly and happily as she evidently handles them. Children respond to this in word and tone. Their "Ohs" and "Ahs" as they look at the kittens have the caressing tone of the soft charcoal pictures. This description sounds sentimental, but children of today can stand a little sweetness and light now and then.

*Mittens*, *Babette*, *Barkis*, and *Marshmallow* are cat stories, but they also include one puppy, one rabbit, and the children. *Percy*, *Polly*, and *Pete* is the amusing story of an old mother cat who tries to hide her three kittens from the strenuous affection of two-year-old Shasha. This is Mrs. Newberry's nearest approach to a plot in her books, but the tender appeal of her pictures and the kindness that pervades the stories make them well worth while.

Illustration by Peggy Bacon for  
*Buttons* by Tom Robinson, Viking, 1938 (book 8¼ x 12)

Notice the background details of this picture—  
alley trash, desperate cat motherhood, feline  
starvation! These heighten the effect of the central  
figure, *Buttons*, cat desperado, powerfully drawn,  
complete in every detail of battle-scarred courage.

### Tom Robinson *Buttons*

Another distinguished picture-story which has never enjoyed the popularity it deserves is *Buttons* by Tom Robinson, superbly illustrated by Peggy Bacon and in fine format from the knowing hands of May Massee. There have been innumerable stories about fluffy kittens, Siamese exotics, and felines of various ages and colors, but *Buttons* is the first tale about an alley cat, the son of an alley cat, a hero to the last scratch. Born in an ash can, orphaned at six weeks, fighting his way to the kingship of the alley mousers—how he managed to leave all this behind and attain cleanly security makes a grand tale. These are not pretty cats, and starvation looks out of their gaunt faces, but there is desperate courage among them and the will to live. Perhaps for these reasons *Buttons* shouldn't be given to the four-year-olds, or at least to all four-year-olds, but from then on children can well afford to pore over these pictures and sympathize with the forlorn but unquenchable hero, *Buttons*. His change to soft-furred opulence, to loving and being loved, shows what kindness can do.

### C. W. Anderson The *Blaze* stories Solute

The first author to give young children adequate horse stories is C. W. Anderson. His books range in their appeal from the five-year-old level to high school. They are good, substantial stories with splendid drawings of horses by a man who knows every muscle,



He wasn't dressed like a king,  
But he was king of the Alley

every stance, and every cavorting of these big, amiable creatures. The books begin for the five-year-olds with *Billy and Blaze*, the simple story of a little boy who gets his first pony and names it *Blaze* for the star on its forehead. Then comes *Blaze and the Gypsies*, in which the pony is stolen by gypsies but is eventually recovered. Finally, there is *Blaze and the Forest Fire*, in which Billy discovers a fire and rides *Blaze* to give the alarm. Children of five like these stories, but slow readers of eight and nine or even ten will read them with pleasure also, because of the horse pictures and the direct style of the narratives.

After these *Blaze* books, Mr. Anderson begins his stories of the race horses he knows so well. He retains child characters in these books, too—horsy children who read everything there is to read about the great racers, and study horse training humbly and devotedly. One value of these books is the picture they give of the patience needed to make a

racer. *Salute*, for children nine to twelve, is a great favorite. It is the story of ten-year-old Peter, whose idol is the great race horse, Man o' War. How Peter nurses a broken-down race horse back to health, enters him in a minor race, wins a five-hundred-dollar purse, and manages to buy an obscure yearling grandson of Man o' War is the story. But there is far more to the book than this somewhat incredible plot. There are Peter's intelligent devotion to great horses and his willingness to work hard and patiently day after day on their care and training. There are his standards of horse character, good ones for human beings, too, and there is the nobility of these gallant racers. The realistic attitude of the trainer prevents this story from being too idealized.

*High Courage* is another story of horse racing written for older children, twelve to any age. It is more exciting than *Salute*; in fact it is a thriller, but it has the same fine values and emphasis on character in both horses and people. This story has a girl, Patsy, for its leading character, although the horse, Bobcat, is really the hero. Incidentally, Patsy's respect for and faith in her Negro horse trainer show the fine human relationships that are to be found in all the Anderson stories.

Margaret and Helen Johnson  
Barney of the North

Each of the dog stories written and illustrated by Margaret Johnson and her mother, Helen Johnson, deals with a particular species, and the plot turns upon that species' peculiar abilities in a particular line. For instance, the collie's latent talent for herding sheep and the Newfoundland's swimming power are turning points in *Black Bruce* and *Barney of the North*. Too many of these books at once are tiresome because the plots are so similar. But young dog lovers enjoy them, and they are useful with slow readers.

Will James  
Smoky

One of the greatest animal stories for children is the Newbery winner for 1927, *Smoky*,

told and illustrated by the cowboy, Will James. Fussy adults are sometimes shocked when they read the author's preface:

I've never yet went wrong in sizing up a man by the kind of a horse he rode. A good horse always packs a good man, and I've always dodged the hombre what had no thought nor liking for his horse or other animals, for I figger that kind of garabo is best to be left unacquainted with. (p. v)

Then the story begins:

It seemed like Mother Nature was sure agreeable that day when the little black colt came to the range world, and tried to get a footing with his long wobbly legs on the brown prairie sod.

*Smoky* is written in the vernacular of the Western cowboy, his everyday speech, with something of the easy loping style of his riding too. There are such verbs as *knoued*, *figgered*, *throwed*, *sashayed*—not academic English, but the cowboy's lingo! And there are horsey words like *stud*, *mare*, *stallion*, and *gelding*.

If a teacher is going to use *Smoky* with a class, particularly one made up of city children, she had better clear up the horsey words in advance. List on the board all the new words that are likely to cause difficulty and refer the children to the dictionary. Then tell them something about horses: how the stallion is responsible for the herd of mares and colts that follow him; how his leadership depends upon fighting off not only enemies but young stallions who would like to take over his leadership; and how the mares and the young colts he has fathered are loyal to him only as long as he can maintain his supremacy against all newcomers. Then remind the children that even if they sometimes forget the words they have looked up and are confused by other words, they should go on reading and the story will usually make the meaning clear.

In *Huckleberry Finn*, Mark Twain uses a vernacular which includes several dialects. *Smoky* is not nearly so hard to read as *Huck*,

but it is difficult for the child who has become word conscious to the point where he is held up by each unfamiliar phrase. A good reader will swing along in spite of individual words, because *Smoky* reads as people talk, with an ease that carries some of the spell-binding qualities of a good storyteller. You don't interrupt him to get the meaning of every word, but you catch the main intent and action of his story.

This writing as people talk has been popularized by such authors of adult fiction as Ernest Hemingway and John Steinbeck. Will James did it effortlessly in *Smoky*. Don't let the bad grammar deceive you into thinking for one moment that this is a crudely written story. It is composed with consummate art. If children are troubled by the large number of strange words or such highly descriptive phrases as *crowhopped*, *hightailed*, and the like, a little help in the beginning will tide them over these minor difficulties, and they will get from this easy narrative a portrait of a horse they will never forget.

The story is simple, but the details are rich and absorbing. Smoky is a little range colt "fetched up" by his mammy and by his own high spirits and intelligence. When it comes his turn to be broken, he puts up a terrific fight, but he has the luck to fall into the skillful hands of the cowboy Clint, who loses his heart to this spunky, handsome pony. Smoky is broken and trained but will allow no one to handle him except Clint. The little horse gains a reputation for being the finest cow pony on the range and is Clint's special pride. Then Smoky is stolen by a vicious half-breed who treats the horse so cruelly that he turns into a killer. Under the name of The Cougar, he fights all rodeo riders until he is worn out. Then he is sold to a livery stable. There he is overworked and uncared-for, and he is foundered by an ignorant rider. From this experience he recovers only partially and is sold to a vegetable vendor, whose cruelty equals the half-breed's. Clint, in town for a rodeo, discovers his horse at last, a broken-down nag. Clint beats up the

vendor and takes his horse. Smoky does not even know him. Back at the range where he was born, old Smoky is fed, rubbed, doctored, and presently turned out in the spring sunshine with the colts. Still he does not know Clint, but the little colts—yes, he knows just what to do about them:

The cowboy could near see the horse smile at the little colts. . . .

"Daggone his old hide," says the cowboy, "it looks to me like he's good to live and enjoy life for many summers yet. . . ."

Weeks pass before Smoky returns to the barn and nickers for Clint:

Clint dropped his bucket in surprise at what he heard and then seen. For, standing out a ways, slick and shiny, was the old mouse-colored horse. The good care the cowboy had handed him, and afterwards the ramblings over the old home range, had done its work. The heart of Smoky had come to life again, and full size.

No briefing of this book and no excerpts give any idea of its power. The sad parts, especially the half-breed episode, are so moving it is almost impossible to reread them in detail, but lovers of this book will read over and over the colt days and the happy youth of Smoky. Never once does the author sentimentalize or humanize his horses. It must have been a temptation to make Smoky recognize Clint when they are finally reunited. But the whole winter passes, and it is not until more and more associations are accumulated from the country, the colts, and the home range that the final association with Clint is restored, and Smoky nickers his old greeting. If children are going to weep over animal stories, here is one that is worth their tears.

#### Glen Rounds The Blind Colt

*The Blind Colt* by Glen Rounds is another *Smoky* for children eight to twelve. It is humorous and moving, and is, besides, a completely satisfying "Western."

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His uncle tells him it must be shot, and the boy is inconsolable. Finally he wins a reprieve for the blind but spunky animal. When it survives all the dangers of a hard winter and marauding wolves, Whitey begins the colt's training. His success convinces Uncle Torval that this is really a smart colt and will make a good "Sunday horse" at least. So Whitey keeps his colt and the colt finds security.

Written in the cowboy vernacular like *Smoky* but a much easier and happier story to read, this book makes an instant appeal to boys. The pictures by the author convey some of the excitement of the colt's adventures and escapes. *Blind Colt* is followed by several good Westerns with earnest young Whitey as the resourceful hero.

**Mary O'Hara**

My Friend Flicka

Thunderhead

Green Grass of Wyoming

*My Friend Flicka*, *Thunderhead*, and *Green Grass of Wyoming*, a trilogy by Mary O'Hara (Mary Sture-Vasa), were written for adults but have been appropriated by the children who can read them. They deal with the biology of horse breeding on the McLaughlins' ranch, where the problems are complicated by a bad wild-horse strain from a white stallion they call the Albino. Ken, the juvenile hero of *My Friend Flicka*, falls in love with a colt from this strain. When he is finally allowed to choose a young horse for his very own, he chooses—to his father's distress—this half-wild filly, which he later calls Flicka. His father warns him that he will never be able to break her, that the whole breed is "loco"—crazy. When the boy begins to work with the horse, she lives up to her reputation. Her fights for freedom are harrowing to read about. She nearly kills both Ken and herself. Finally, the boy is told Flicka is dying from her self-inflicted injuries. Unable to sleep, Ken gets up in the night and finds the horse half under water in a stream to which she has dragged herself. All night long he holds her in that icy water, keeping her head up. When the family

finds the pair in the morning, Flicka is on the mend, but the boy is desperately ill from the exposure. Ken lives to see his horse gentled at last, as tractable and intelligent as any. Ken apparently is right about Flicka, but the father is not convinced. Through both of these books runs the conflict of the strong-willed father and son, much alike, loving each other dearly, but critical of each other, too, because they are so much alike. Family relationships are strained from time to time but on the whole are understanding and affectionate. The horses are the center of interest for the whole family.

*Thunderhead* is the name given to Flicka's first colt, which, to everyone's horror, turns out to be pure white. This means that Flicka has mated with the Albino, and the loco strain will be intensified in the colt. Indeed, *Thunderhead* has intelligence, tremendous speed, but complete instability. The colt dislikes Ken, who is training him. When *Thunderhead* wishes to run, his speed is amazing and everyone begins to have hopes of developing a great racer, except Mr. McLaughlin, who cannot be brought to trust the strain. This story of *Thunderhead* runs off in three directions. First there are the falling fortunes of the father with his horses and the consequent rift between him and his devoted wife. Then there are Ken's ups and downs in trying to make a racer of *Thunderhead*. Finally, there are *Thunderhead*'s own excursions back to the great canyon and the mesa, where he encounters his father, the Albino. The old stud's fight with his young son almost wrecks *Thunderhead*. From then on, he watches the Albino and his brood mares from a safe distance; he is biding his time for a final fight with his sire. After his last great race, the horse returns to the canyon and Ken sees him take his stand against the Albino. It is a terrific fight, but the young horse wins and the mares are his; *Thunderhead* has gone back to the wild strain from which he came. Ken and his father complete the separation. They blow up the rocks in the gorge, dividing, so they think, the wild horses from

the ranch and bidding farewell to the untamable Thunderhead. *Green Grass of Wyoming* shows Ken growing up, and includes a teenage romance.

**Marguerite Henry**

*King of the Wind*

Brighty of the Grand Canyon

Today's children and many adults believe that Marguerite Henry is probably the most successful writer of horse stories we have ever had. Her success rests on a sound basis. Every book represents meticulous research, the stories measure up to the highest standards of good storytelling, the animal heroes are true to their species, and the people in her books are as memorable as the animals.

*Justin Morgan Had a Horse* brought Mrs. Henry immediate fame. For this book she conducted an intensive search for information about the ancestor of the Morgan breed and the people responsible for establishing it. It is the story of a poor teacher and singing master who accepted two horses in payment for a debt. One of them was a big, handsome creature and the other was a runt of a colt. It was Justin Morgan's young pupil, Joel, who saw in the colt a rare combination of intelligence, strength, and willingness. In fact, Joel fell in love with the colt, called him Little Bub, and began to train him. When the horse showed that he had both strength and speed, men began to exploit him. Joel, because he was too poor to buy his beloved horse, had to stand by and see Little Bub overtaken but a winner in a pulling bee. After that the horse was matched against thoroughbreds in a race, and later he was sold out of the state. The story of the reunion, years later, of Joel and Bub is as moving as the Clint and Smoky reunion. Bub lived to achieve new honor, sire innumerable colts, and establish the Morgan line.

Mrs. Henry's next story, *Misty of Chincoteague*, followed the history of the little wild horses on the island of Chincoteague, Virginia. She wrote *Sea Star, Orphan of Chincoteague* a few years later, but in between was

the Newbery winner, *King of the Wind* (1948). For this story, the author pursued the history of the great Godolphin Arabian, which changed the physical conformation of race horses and sired a line of thoroughbreds from which Man o' War was descended. It is one of the most exciting and moving horse stories ever written, and it is enormously popular with both children and teachers.

If *King of the Wind* had not won the Newbery Medal, *Brighty of the Grand Canyon* (1953) certainly would have. It is the story of the legendary burro, wild and solitary, whose hoofs galloping up and down the walls of the Grand Canyon are said to have made that terrifying path known as Bright Angel Trail. Brighty is the most winning of all Mrs. Henry's four-footed heroes. He is a comic, like all burros, but lonely too. His search for companionship, his loyalty to those who are kind to him, and his gay flights back to freedom make a thrilling story of animal and human adventure.

What gives these books by Marguerite Henry their unique distinction? First of all, she can make the true pattern of animal life so vivid that readers identify themselves with it. Yet the animals are never humanized. With complete integrity to their species, these creatures exhibit traits that children most admire in human beings—fortitude, loyalty, and a blithe zest for life.

In every book there are memorable people. There is the mute in *King of the Wind*, who suffers doubly with his horse because he cannot tell people what they are too stupid to discover. And there is Joel, a bound boy unable to save Little Bub from sale, but loyal in his search for the Morgan. Grandpa and Grandma and Maureen and Paul in *Misty and Star* are as endearing as the horses and as true. No reader will ever forget Uncle Jimmy Owen, who befriends and aids Brighty but lets him go his own free way. Finally, Mrs. Henry creates such absorbing stories that her remarkable writing skill has never received due credit. Reread the dialogue in these books. It moves and flows with the fluidity

of real speech, with delightful overtones of homely philosophy. The descriptions are vivid and often beautiful, but they never bog down the story nor the reader's interest in the action and characters. In *King of the Wind*, read the dramatic account of the rape of Roxana, the famous mare, by the Godolphin Arabian. The facts are made clear, yet with so light and swift a touch that the chapter can be read aloud without embarrassment—no mean feat. Marguerite Henry's vigorous prose never lapses into sentimentality or over-emotionalism, even in such moving scenes as Joel's dramatic reunion with the broken-down Bub. All these qualities mean good writing.

Children are delighted to learn that on Mrs. Henry's little farm there is a fine Morgan horse and a modern near-relation of Brighty. Moreover, the real Misty lives there in clover, adored by young Brighty. And on a mountainside near Warrenton, the horsiest of Virginia's horse-loving communities, lives Wesley Dennis, the illustrator of Marguerite Henry's most famous books. So remarkable are Mr. Dennis' identification with and interpretation of these stories in his pictures that both children and adults think of text and illustrations as an inseparable whole. Beautiful color and a feeling for the country as well as the characters make the illustrations a delight. And the humor and tenderness of his *Brighty* pictures are something special. Together, this gifted author and artist have also made the beautiful *Album of Horses and Wagging Tails; an Album of Dogs*. May their good books continue.

**Joseph Wharton Lippincott**  
Wilderness Champion

Joseph Lippincott, publisher by vocation and naturalist by avocation, writes engaging stories, chiefly about wild creatures. *Wilderness Champion* is the story of a red setter pup which is lost in the mountains and raised by a black wolf. Through field glasses his master sees the dog hunting with the wolves. Reddy is a powerful dog in prime condition, and his companion is a huge black wolf the men

call King. His master gets Reddy again only because he comes upon the dog caught in an illegal trap. Nursing the dog back to health in the forest where he found him, the master is conscious of the black wolf hovering near. One morning he finds Reddy has been moved and his wounds thoroughly licked; so the master knows that King, the old wolf, has been there in the night helping his friend. Meanwhile, the dog is developing a fondness for the man and goes with him to his cabin, where the other dogs, which are actually his brothers, help establish Reddy's liking for the place and his sense of belonging there. Reddy becomes a man's dog, and his friend the wolf disappears for a while from that part of the mountains. Reddy is taught to hunt with men, and is taken south and entered in field trials where he wins all contests—but he is dispirited. Finally his master takes him back to his own mountains and turns him loose. Reddy sets off at once at his old wolf pace, loping up the mountains toward wolf country. How he finds the King and stays with him faithfully until his death is the most thrilling part of the tale. With the King gone, Reddy is lost for a while; then he returns to his master, a man's dog again.

*Wahoo Bobcat* is the still more unusual story of the friendship that developed between a huge bobcat and a small, solitary boy. The story centers on the bobcat's struggle to survive in a changing environment where he is ceaselessly pursued by the hunters and their dogs. *Phantom Deer* deals with the battle one old man wages to save the gentle miniature deer of the Florida Keys from total extermination. It takes government action to save the deer and old Hickey too. For younger or less skilled readers Mr. Lippincott has written *Striped Coat the Skunk*. It is the story of a war between skunk and farmer, with humor and final success on the side of the skunk.

The human characters in these stories are of secondary importance. However, these tales of the wilderness life of hunted creatures are scientifically accurate, and in the process

of reading them children develop deeper understanding and sympathy.

**Theodore J. Waldeck**

*On Safari*

*The White Panther*

Theodore J. Waldeck is writing some unusually fine stories of jungle animals in their native haunts. His autobiographical *On Safari*, besides being an amusing account of himself as a cub explorer, contains some unforgettable pictures of the jungle creatures. This book is tremendously popular with teenage boys and deservedly so. Of the stories, *The White Panther* is a favorite. It follows this rare and much hunted creature from cub days to maturity. Life is mostly eating, sleeping, stalking prey, killing, and eating again, broken only by fights with enemies and accompanied by a continual alert against man. Ku-Ma, with his coat like faintly dappled white velvet, is an appealing creature only because of his uncanny beauty. He is a sleek bundle of appetite and ferocity, although, unlike man, he kills only to eat or to preserve his life. His perils are many, especially from man, who hunts his rare pelt. How Ku-Ma escapes even the clever man-made trap is the triumphant conclusion of the book. The Waldeck stories leave the reader with no delusions about the possible sweetness and light of these wild creatures. Rather they build up in his mind a respect for their skill, resourcefulness, and courage. Mr. Waldeck writes well. Children comment on his ability to rouse immediate and intense interest from the first paragraph. Certainly no one today has a more detailed and exact knowledge of jungle life. His books are to be highly recommended for children from twelve years old on.

**Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings**

*The Yearling*

Although *The Yearling* by Marjorie Rawlings was written for adults, many children have appropriated it even as they have appropriated adult books in every generation. It is a

beautifully written story of a lonely boy, living in the primitive wilds of inland Florida with his family and his pet deer, Flag. Jody is only a boy when the story begins, as full of play as his fawn. But life as hard as the Baxters know it to be makes for an early maturing of young things. Penny Baxter, the father, realizes that his son's period of play will be almost as brief as the deer's, and he watches Jody and Flag with sad tenderness. Together the boy and the deer frolic and grow, make mistakes and are punished, only to forget and play again. Finally Flag, the year-old deer, begins to eat the family's scanty crops as fast as they grow. There is not enough food for the maturing deer and the family. Penny knows the dreaded time has come to make Jody face facts; Flag must be shot. The boy is frantic and will not listen to his father. Penny is bedridden and so cannot do what needs to be done. The tragedy of those last hours of the boy with his deer are too much for Jody, and he runs away. When he returns, father and boy talk together for a long time. Penny says, "You've taken a punishment. You ain't a yearlin' no longer." That night, in the beginning of his sleep, Jody cries out, "Flag!"

It was not his own voice that called. It was a boy's voice. Somewhere beyond the sink-hole, past the magnolia, under the live oaks, a boy and a yearling ran side by side, and were gone forever.

This poignant story of growing up is more boy than deer, but it turns upon a child's devotion to a pet. Not all adults understand how deeply rooted such a love can be. The child feels the animal not only loves him but depends upon him and trusts him. Yet he may be called upon to give up his pet, send it away, or have it "put to sleep." A child so forced to betray the creature which loves him may suffer just as passionately as Jody did over Flag. And that suffering, as adults also fail to realize, is compounded of bitter, if temporary, hatred for the grown-ups who demand such a sacrifice, as well as of lacerating sorrow over the loss of the loving and

beloved creature. Not all children have the wise tenderness of a father like Penny to come back to. There was a father who could help his son grow up. Penny could not spare his son pain, but he could help him understand the reason for the pain and give him the courage to stand it. Children who have suffered these heartbreaking separations from a loved and loving pet may read *The Yearling* or *Good-bye, My Lady* over and over. A better catharsis for such pent-up emotions could hardly be found.

### Illustrations by N. C. Wyeth

No comment on *The Yearling* is complete without a word about its illustrator, Newell Convers Wyeth. A happier choice of an artist to interpret this story could not have been made. Wyeth journeyed down to the hammock country of Florida to study both the land and the people. The results were pictures so true and yet so imaginative that they represent a high point in the remarkable achievement of this dean of illustrators of children's books: Jody running over the sandy road with the sunlight on his blond hair and flag, stepping daintily, the sunlight making an aureole around his pretty head and lean graceful body; or Jody lying on his stomach in the forest dreamily watching his little flutter-mill; or Jody and Penny in a wild, ecstatic dance of triumph over the slaying of old Slewfoot, the bear; or Jody sitting on the floor in front of the fire with his arms around Flag, boy and deer older now—dangerously older—with something of the gaiety of fawn and little boy gone out of them. These are beautiful pictures, pictures which interpret the story as perhaps no other artist could have done.

N. C. Wyeth has created a Jody as he created a Long John Silver in *Treasure Island*, a Robinson Crusoe, and many other juvenile heroes so that they remain forever the image of the character.

Wyeth painted in a great tradition. He studied with Howard Pyle, whose heroic and humorous illustrations of *Robin Hood* Wyeth

admired. Like Pyle, Wyeth combined romanticism with the literal realism of a child. Every detail in his pictures—the flora and fauna of the Florida scrub in *The Yearling*, the furniture in Penny's house, the clothes and the characterizations of the people—is realistically convincing, and also imaginatively and romantically composed.

When N. C. Wyeth was killed in an automobile accident in the autumn of 1945, he was only sixty-two years old and still painting with undiminished power. He was often rated as one of the greatest illustrators of children's books. Certainly no other contemporary artist has brought truer interpretations or more eye-filling beauty to books. See pages 45 and 300 for examples of his work.

### James Arthur Kjelgaard

Big Red

Snow Dog

Jim Kjelgaard, as he always signs himself, writes dog stories as excellent as Marguerite Henry's horse stories. His books are equally absorbing, with fine literary quality and the very breath of the wilderness blowing through the pages. His dogs are so lovable and courageous, so true to their breeds and devoted to the men who love them, that the people in these books are of less importance than the dogs.

*Snow Dog* (1948) tells a haunting story of a wilderness pup, part Husky and part staghound, that lives wild until a trapper befriends it. This is a dramatic tale of hardships, courage, and devotion.

Beginning with *Big Red* (1945), Mr. Kjelgaard has written three books about the champion Irish setters in Mr. Haggin's kennels. Ross Pickett and his son Danny care for, train, and completely devote themselves to the "Irishmen" above all other breeds of dogs. In the first story, Danny and Big Red both prove their mettle in a series of adventures culminating in the tracking down of a great bear.

In *Irish Red, Son of Big Red*, Mr. Haggin imports some English setters and a new

trainer. When the Picketts leave, Mike, the "mutton-headed" son of Big Red, trails them. Their winter in the woods is rugged for all of them, but when they return to the kennels, Mike is a disciplined and worthy son of Big Red and maintains the glory of the Irish dogs against the English. *Outlaw Red*, the third book, is almost all dog. Pampered Sean, another son of Big Red, is lost in the wilderness and is almost shot as a suspected sheep killer. Bewildered and lonely, the dog makes a painful adjustment to his new life. The story of how he manages to survive, secure a mate of his own breed, and raise his pups may stretch the long arm of coincidence a bit, but it is convincingly told. This is an enthralling series of books for dog lovers.

Jim Kjelgaard has written other dog stories, and even in his recent mystery stories dogs invariably play an important part. Always he interprets the world of nature, the nobility of great dogs, and the patience and understanding of men who love them, with a fidelity and warmth that never grow stale.

#### **John and Jean George**

##### **Vulpes, the Red Fox**

John George, zoologist, and his artist wife, Jean, have turned their unusual combination of talents to the production of books about wild animals. In most of the books the story follows the animal's life cycle: his discoveries, mistakes, and escapes; his mating and raising of young; and his continual search for food and struggle against enemies—always with death just around the corner.

The hero of *Vulpes, the Red Fox* (1948), for instance, is known to every hunter for his superb pelt, his raids on barnyards, and his skillful escapes from both dogs and men with guns. Actually, Vulpes is so swift and so powerful that he sometimes courts the hunt to enjoy the befuddlement of the hounds, or at least so the hunters think. Meanwhile, readers follow his search for a mate. Rejecting a nervous weakling, he courts a strong, handsome vixen, a worthy mate. Cubs are born, and the relentless battle for food con-

tinues. Finally, one unwary moment, death comes to Vulpes at the hands of the hunters. Yet somehow, this inevitable ending is not sad. Vulpes has lived a zestful life. He has loved the sun on his fur, the excitement of the chase, and the sweetness of mate and cubs. And death comes swiftly, a good end.

*Masked Prowler* follows a similar pattern except that at the finish old Procyon, the aged raccoon, after an epic battle with the dogs, retires in triumph to lick his wounds and become a forest myth. The animal hero in *Vison, the Mink* is too blood-thirsty to be appealing. *Bubo, the Great Horned Owl* is one of the most dramatic of these stories. Most of us know little about great horned owls, the "tigers" of the forest. Their size and the ferocity of their hunting would seem to make them invulnerable. Instead, they are hunted by every creature in the forest in one way or another. Twice Bubo's fledglings are destroyed. With a third brood, Black Talon, the female, is killed. Bubo calls her in vain, but manages to raise his young to maturity. The book ends with Bubo facing the winter alone.

Although *Meph, the Pet Skunk* follows the amusing development of the skunk, it is chiefly the story of the reclamation of an eroded farm, and of an unhappy farmer and his disturbed teen-age boy. It is a fine story for young people.

In all of these books, both the writing and the wonderful illustrations show acute observation and a scientific knowledge of these woodland creatures and the country they inhabit. The stories and pictures also have a rare sense of the beauty and drama of the forest. Every book should be a welcome addition to the libraries of young naturalists.

#### **Page Cooper**

##### **Amigo, Circus Horse**

Franz is the fifteen-year-old son of a famous rider of Lippizan horses, meticulously trained in the advanced techniques known as *haute école*. Franz too is learning this art. Why then should he have lost his heart to Amigo, a

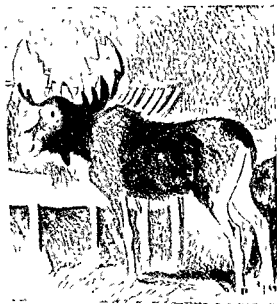


Illustration by Kurt Wiese for *Honk: the Moose*  
by Phil Stong, Dodd, Mead, 1951  
(original in color, book 8 x 9½)

*Who but Kurt Wiese could draw a huge, ungainly moose with a soulful eye that pleads for all the comforts to which he is unaccustomed? Fierce jungle animal, powerful sea creature, or hopeful moose, Wiese draws them all with sure skill.*

trouper, is a moving climax to a colorful story.

**Philip Duffield Stong**  
*Honk: the Moose*

There is so much inevitable sadness about animal stories that it is a satisfaction to remind readers young and old that *Honk: the Moose* is a tale of sheer hilarity. Written in 1935 and joyously illustrated in color by Kurt Wiese, it is the story of a huge moose which insists upon being housed and cared for during the Minnesota winter. What he does to that small Finnish-American community is a caution. There is no attempt to present scientific animal lore in this perennial favorite—just a problem moose on the loose!

**Lynd Ward**  
*The Biggest Bear*

Another delectable comedy is Lynd Ward's *The Biggest Bear*, which won the Caldecott Medal almost by public acclamation. Young Johnny was so mortified because his family had no bearskin nailed up on their barn door that he set off to capture a bear all by himself. He did it, too, and brought it home alive. That bear grew and grew and grew, and Johnny's problems grew right along with the bear. The solution, like most things in life, was a compromise, but not half bad for either Johnny or the bear. Adults are as captivated by this story and its heart-warming pictures as are children.

**Emil E. Liers**  
*An Otter's Story*

A more lovable creature than the playful, affectionate, fresh-water otter doesn't exist. That it should be so ruthlessly hunted by

nervous and unreliable Palomino horse? Two other circus youngsters are Franz's best friends. Mulk is the son of a Hindu lion tamer and expects to be an animal man also. Dolores is an Argentine orphan, cared for by the snake charmer and studying to be an equestrienne like her famous mother. In their brief leisure the three young people are boon companions, but first and foremost they are professionals, each one dedicated to perfecting his art. There is a friendly rivalry among them to see which one will make the big center ring first.

In the course of time and after some harrowing experiences Franz obtains Amigo for his own and undertakes his training both in stability and in *haute école*. It is a study in patience and persistence. In the end, all three youngsters have made the big center ring, each in a star act. This book gives children the most intimate picture of circus life we have. They see the domestic life of the performers and their daily self-disciplined work. The animal handlers are there, brave, patient, and knowing. There are terrifying emergencies. The animals—the big cats, the horses, the elephants—are as individual as the human performers. The farewell performance of the trained elephant, old Sadie, a wonderful



farmers is hard to understand. Mr. Liers tells a delightful story of one otter family and makes clear their harmlessness as well as their usefulness to the balance of nature both

for farmers and fishermen. The story is based upon long observation, and every incident is vouched for. Tony Palazzo's handsome illustrations are as spirited as the text.

## Criteria for judging animal stories

These three groups of animal stories (discussed under *Ourselves in fur*, *Animals as animals but talking*, and *Animals as animals*) could be subdivided, but there is no point in spinning the distinctions too fine. These categories are important chiefly because they call attention to diverse purposes and points of view in the stories and because they suggest somewhat our approach to the stories and our judgment of these stories.

Unquestionably, the group of books in which the animals strut about with the same virtues and foibles as human beings is the gayest and the youngest. In the stories about Babar or Ferdinand, in *Horton Hatches the Egg* or *Rabbit Hill*, these absurd animals are doubly funny because they parody the people we know. The stories in this group are mostly animal comics, with *Rabbit Hill* and *The Wind in the Willows* striking more serious and mature notes. These beast tales appeal chiefly to children three to seven years old, but a few appeal to the tens and even twelves. Of the folk-tale type we ask only good entertainment and good style. Such stories to be sound must be true to human, not animal, nature, and they must be told with light-hearted wisdom.

The stories of animals scientifically represented, with the exception of their power to think and speak, are a more serious group. In the "Tail" series and similar stories for children from seven to ten, disasters and death are close at hand, gently suggested but unmistakably present. *Charlotte's Web* remains light-hearted until death impinges at the end. In the stories for older children, nine to twelve, there are the real hardships and suffering, the cruelty and tragedy, of books like *Bambi*. Such stories induct children gradually into the difficult lives of animals, con-

stantly threatened by other animals, natural forces, and man.

This hybrid literary form is the most likely to become overly sentimental. The horse in *Black Beauty* is an overly humanized animal. The *Jungle Books*, on the other hand, are scrupulously true to the nature and ways of each species, in spite of endowing it with speech. In short, when animals are described as animals but talking, they must be faithful representations of their species. Their behavior and their problems must be only those of their animal world.

The third type of story in which the animals are objectively portrayed must be completely scientific and convincing. This means that the criteria for these and the second type of animal story (*Animals as animals but talking*) are much alike. The difference lies in the fact that in this third type, the author may never interpret the animals' motives or behavior through giving the animal speech or thought. He may guess at the motives of his animal hero, but those guesses must accord with the interpretation of animal behavior as reliable observers have recorded it.

The books in which animals are objectively recorded as animals are a growing and increasingly popular body of stories for children from seven or eight to maturity; these stories range from mere thrillers to substantial literature. They may be as gay and humorous as *Honk: the Moose*, but they are likely to be harrowing or tragic. The authors do not necessarily wish to play on the reader's emotions merely to rouse or hold interest, but the lives of most animals, whether wild or domestic, run into tragedy sooner or later. It has been said that wild creatures rarely die a natural death. These books show this to be true. Even pets are subject to the changing fortunes and

whims of the human beings to whom they belong. They may be sold or given away or misunderstood to a tragic degree. Such dramatic situations make up the plots of many of these tales, and such stories are almost unavoidably melancholy.

If the animal hero is sufficiently appealing or the human and animal relationship sufficiently strong, such tragedies will attract readers even to a poor story. In these strongly emotional plots we need to be more than ordinarily alert to what is a true and consistent story, and to what is pure animal melodrama. A little melodrama or a few trashy books are not going to hurt children, but they should not miss the great animal tales in a welter of second-rate ones.

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There is rarely any need to urge children to read stories about animals. Children see the varied forms of life from birds and snakes to kittens and elephants, and they stare and wonder—what are these creatures like? Books help to answer their curiosity. From *Buttons* young children find out how hard life can be for small homeless creatures in a large city. From Marie Ets' entrancing *Play with Me* they discover how shy wild creatures are, how quiet must be the approach of human beings.

Pet stories bring out the child's desire to nurture and protect, and, as he matures, he learns about the piteous vulnerability of animals at the hands of cruel masters or hunters and trappers. Such stories encourage a compassionate sense of kinship with animals. Many of these books teach sex casually in the course of an absorbing story. That is true of *My Friend Flicka*, the books by John and Jean George, and many others. For city chil-

dren who have almost no companionship with animals and little or no knowledge of breeding and the raising of young, these stories are especially valuable. From the stories that center on the proper training of dogs and horses, young readers gain a background for the training of their own pets.

Some of these books have special values children need. *The Yearling*, *Sea Pup*, and *Good-bye, My Lady* are all centered on boy heroes but involve a relationship with a unique pet that is so full of mutual love and dependence that it might have retarded the boy's development. Why it doesn't makes these stories especially worth while.

Best of all, these four-footed heroes display the very qualities that children most admire in human beings—courage in the face of danger, fortitude in suffering, loyalty to cubs, mate, or master, and finally, a gay, frolicsome zest for life that is much like the child's own frisky, coltish enjoyment of each day. These are all good reasons why the child enjoys fine books about animals.

Since the mere nature of the wild animal's life means chiefly pursuit or being pursued, escape or death; and since the drama of a pet's life turns upon the upsetting of its happy security with a tragic or triumphant outcome, there is bound to be a certain similarity in these tales. Too many of them in a row are monotonous or overly harrowing. Such stories should be read along with other books. But any child is the richer for having had his sympathies expanded and his tenderness stirred by such great animal books as *Smoky*, *Big Red*, *Buttons*, *Sea Pup*, and *The Yearling*. Any child is the poorer for having missed the drama of the *Jungle Books* or *King of the Wind*.

## Illustrative selections

*The following chapters from books are representative of the fine realistic fiction available for children four years old through the teen age. Pages 485-495 have excerpts from good "here and now" books; pages 495-502 tell of "other times and places"; and pages 502-506*

*give two selections from animal stories—the first illustrating "animals as animals but talking," and the second, "animals as animals objectively recorded." Examples characteristic of "talking beasts—ourselves in fur" are given on pages 353-355, 370, and 385-390.*

### The Picnic Basket<sup>1</sup>

ONE cool summer morning Andrewshek's Auntie Katushka said, "Andrewshek, I think I will put some sandwiches and some cottage cheese and some poppy seed cakes and two eggs in our picnic basket. Then we will go to the park and eat our lunch there, near the water."

"May I go with you, Auntie Katushka?" said Andrewshek.

"Of course you may go to the park with me," said Auntie Katushka. "But first we have a great many things to do, before we can start to the park. I must go into the garden and catch the white goat. I will tie her up so she will not run away. Please find the kitten, Andrewshek, and put her in the cellar, so she will not worry the chickens while we are gone."

"Yes, indeed, I will find the kitten and put her in the cellar," said Andrewshek, "so she will not worry the chickens while we are gone."

But all Andrewshek really did was to lift up the red and white napkin which Auntie Katushka had laid over the picnic basket and look at the eggs and the poppy seed cakes and touch the sandwiches and taste the cottage cheese.

The goat was not easy to catch. The goat wanted to go to the park, too. She galloped round and round the garden.

<sup>1</sup>From *The Poppy Seed Cakes* by Margery Clark, copyright 1924, by Doubleday & Company, Inc.

At last Auntie Katushka caught her and tied her firmly to a post.

Then Auntie Katushka went into the house to get Andrewshek and the lunch basket. She saw Andrewshek peeping under the red and white napkin and tasting the cottage cheese. He had forgotten all about the kitten.

The kitten was nowhere to be found. "I think she must be paying a visit to the Mouse family," said Auntie Katushka.

Then Auntie Katushka put on her bright shawl and took her umbrella with the long crooked handle under one arm. Then she picked up the lunch basket with the red and white napkin on top and she and Andrewshek started for the park.

They went down the hill and across the tracks and past the market and down a long street until they came to the park by the water.

Andrewshek sat down on the grass beside a little stream. Andrewshek's Auntie Katushka laid her umbrella with the long crooked handle and the basket of lunch on the grass beside Andrewshek.

"Andrewshek," said Auntie Katushka, "I must go to the spring and get some water for us to drink. Please watch the basket with the eggs and the sandwiches and poppy seed cakes and cottage cheese while I am gone."

"Yes, indeed, I will watch the basket of lunch," said Andrewshek.

But what Andrewshek really did was to say to himself, "I would like to take off my shoes and my stockings and wade in the little stream I believe I will!"

Andrewshek took off his shoes and his stockings and went wading in the little stream.

A big white swan came floating calmly down the stream. He saw the picnic basket lying on the grass. He stopped and stretched and stretched his long neck, till he could touch the basket. "Honk! honk! honk!" said he. "I wonder what is under the red and white napkin."

The big white swan lifted the napkin with his red bill and looked in the basket. "Oh, oh, oh! Won't Mother Swan be pleased with this nice lunch!" said he. "Sandwich bread makes fine food for baby swans."

He picked up the basket in his strong red bill and floated it ahead of him down the stream.

Andrewshek could not wade after the big white swan. The water was too deep.

"Stop! Stop! White Swan!" cried Andrewshek. "That is my Auntie Katushka's picnic basket and it has our lunch in it. Please put it back on the grass."

'No, indeed! I will not put the basket back," honked the big white swan. "Sandwich bread makes fine food for baby swans and I have ten baby swans to feed."

The big white swan gave the picnic basket a little push with his red bill. The basket floated on down the little stream. The big white swan floated calmly behind it.

Just then Andrewshek's Auntie Katushka came hurrying up with the spring water. She saw the big white swan floating down the stream, with the lunch basket floating ahead of him.

Andrewshek stood in the middle of the stream, crying.

Auntie Katushka picked up her umbrella with the long crooked handle. Auntie Katushka ran along the shore until she overtook the big white swan, with the lunch basket floating ahead of him.

She caught the handle of the picnic basket in the crook of her long handled umbrella. She drew the basket safely to shore.

"Well! well!" said Auntie Katushka, as she spread the red and white napkin on the grass, and laid the sandwiches and the poppy seed cakes and the cottage cheese and the eggs upon it. "It always pays to carry an umbrella to a picnic."

## The Middle Bear<sup>1</sup>

WHEN a play was given at the Town Hall, Sylvie was usually the only one of the four Moffats who was in it. However, once in a while the others were in a play. For instance, Rufus had been the smallest of the seven dwarfs. And once Janey had been a butterfly. She had not been an altogether successful butterfly, though, for she had tripped on the sole of her stocking, turning a somersault all across the stage. And whereas Joey was rarely in a play, he was often in charge of switching the lights on and off.

Jane liked the plays at the Town Hall. In fact she liked them better than the moving pictures. In the moving pictures Jane always found it difficult to tell the good man from the bad man. Especially if they wore black mustaches. Of course the pianist usually played ominous music just before the bad man came on the scene, and that helped. Even so, Jane preferred the plays at the Town Hall. There she had no trouble at all telling the good from the bad.

Now there was to be a play at the Town Hall, "The Three Bears," and all four of the Moffats were going to be in it. Miss Chichester, the dancing school teacher, was putting it on. But the money for the tickets was not going into her pocket or into the Moffats' pockets, even though they were all in the play. The money was to help pay for the new parish house. The old one had burned down last May and now a new one was being built. "The Three Bears" was to help raise the money to finish it. A benefit performance, it was called.

In this benefit performance, Sylvie was to play the part of Goldilocks. Joey was to be the big bear, Rufus the little bear, and Janey the middle bear. Jane had not asked to be the middle bear. It just naturally came out that way. The middle Moffat was going to be the middle bear.

As a rule Joey did not enjoy the idea of acting in a play any more than he liked going to dancing school. However he felt this play would be different. He felt it would be like having a disguise on, to be inside of a bear costume. And Jane felt the same way. She thought the people in the audience would not recognize her as the butterfly who turned a somersault across the stage, because she would be comfortably hidden inside her brown bear costume. As for Rufus, he hoped that Sylvie, the Goldilocks of this

<sup>1</sup>From *The Middle Moffat* by Eleanor Estes, copyright 1942, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

game, would not sit down too hard on that nice little chair of his and really break it to bits. It was such a good chair, and he wished he had it at home.

Mama was making all the costumes, even the bear heads. A big one for Joey, a little one for Rufus, and a middle-sized one for Jane. Of course she wasn't making them out of bear fur; she was using brown outing flannel.

Now Jane was trying on her middle bear costume. She stepped into the body of the costume and then Mama put the head on her.

"Make the holes for the eyes big enough," Jane begged. "So I'll see where I'm going and won't turn somersaults."

"Well," said Mama, "if I cut the eyes any larger you will look like a deep sea diver instead of a bear."

"Oh, well . . ." said Jane hastily. "A bear's got to look like a bear. Never mind making them any bigger, then."

Besides being in the play, each of the Moffats also had ten tickets to sell. And since Rufus really was too little to go from house to house and street to street selling tickets the other three Moffats had even more to dispose of. Forty tickets!

At first Jane wondered if a girl should sell tickets to a play she was going to be in. Was that being conceited? Well, since the money was for the new parish house and not for the Moffats, she finally decided it was all right to sell the tickets. Besides, she thought, who would recognize her as the girl who sold tickets once she was inside her bear costume.

Sylvie sold most of her tickets like lightning to the ladies in the choir. But Joey's and Janey's tickets became grimmer and grimmer, they had such trouble disposing of them. Nancy Stokes said she would help even though she went to a different parish house. She and Joey and Jane went quietly and politely up on people's verandas and rang the bell.

"Buy a ticket for the benefit of the new parish house?" was all they meant to say. But very often no one at all answered the bell.

"They can't all be away," said Nancy. "Do you think they hide behind the curtains when they see us coming?"

"Oh, no," said Jane. "You see it'd be different if the money was for us. But it isn't. It's a benefit. Why should they hide?"

One lady said she was very sorry but she was

making mincemeat. "See?" she said, holding up her hands. They were all covered with mincemeat. So she could not buy a ticket. Not possibly, and she closed the door in their faces.

"She could wash her hands," said Nancy angrily. The children called this lady "mincemeat," ever after. Of course she never knew it.

Yes, the tickets were very hard to sell. But little by little the pile did dwindle. If only everybody were like Mrs. Stokes, they would go very fast. She bought four tickets! Jane was embarrassed.

"Tell your mother she doesn't have to buy all those tickets just 'cause all of us are in the play," she instructed Nancy.

But all the Stokes insisted they really wanted to go. And even if none of the Moffats were in it, they would still want to go, for the play would help to build a new parish house. What nice people! thought Jane. Here they were, a family who went to the white church, buying tickets to help build a parish house for Janey's church. She hoped she would be a good middle bear, so they would be proud they knew her.

At last it was the night of the play. The four Moffats knew their lines perfectly. This was not surprising, considering they all lived in the same house and could practice their lines any time they wanted to. And, besides this, they had had two rehearsals, one in regular clothes and one in their bear costumes.

When Jane reached the Town Hall, she was surprised to find there were many features on the program besides "The Three Bears." The Gillespie twins were going to give a piano duet "By the Brook," it was called. A boy was going to play the violin. Someone else was going to toe dance. And Miss Beale was going to sing a song. A bit program. And the Moffats, all of them except Mama, were going to watch this whole performance from behind the scenes. They could not sit in the audience with the regular people with their bear costumes on, for that would give the whole show away.

Jane fastened her eye to a hole in the curtain. Mama had not yet come. Of course Mama would have to sit out front there with the regular people, even though she had made the costumes. The only people who had arrived so far were Clara Pringle and Brud. They were sitting in the front row and Jane wondered how they had gotten in because the front door that all the regular people were supposed to use wasn't even open yet.

When Jane wasn't peering through a hole in the curtain, Joey or Rufus was. Each one hoped he would be the first to see Mama when she came in. Or now and then they tried to squeeze through the opening at the side of the asbestos curtain. But the gnarled little janitor shook his head at them. So they stayed inside.

Sylvie was busy putting make-up on herself and on the dancers' faces. Jane watched them enviously. The only trouble with wearing a bear costume, she thought, was that she couldn't have her face painted. Well, she quickly consoled herself, she certainly would not have stage fright inside her bear head. Whereas she might if there were just paint on her face. "Somebody has been sitting in my chair," she rehearsed her lines. She stepped into her bear costume. But before putting on her head, she helped Rufus into his bear uniform. He didn't call it a costume. A uniform. A bear uniform. Jane set his head on his shoulders, found his two eyes for him so he could see out, and the little bear was ready.

Joey had no difficulty stepping into his costume and even in finding his own two eyes. Now the big bear and the little bear were ready. Jane looked around for her head, to put it on. Where was it?

"Where's my head?" she asked. "My bear head."

Nobody paid any attention to her. Miss Chichester was running back and forth and all around, giving an order here and an order there. Once as she rushed by, causing a great breeze, Jane yelled to make herself heard, "How can we act 'The Three Bears' unless I find my middle bear head?"

"Not just now. I'm too busy," was all Miss Chichester said.

Everybody was too busy to help Jane find her head. Sylvie was helping the toe dancer dress. Joey was busy running around doing this and doing that for Miss Chichester. And the little old janitor was busy tightening ropes and making sure the lights were working. Rufus could not be torn from a hole in the curtain. He was looking for Mama.

Jane sighed. Everybody's busy, she thought. She rummaged around in a big box of costumes. Maybe her bear head had been stuck in it. She found a dragon head and tried it on. How would that be? She looked in the mirror. The effect was interesting. But, no, she would not wear this, for a bear cannot be a dragon.

Goodness, thought Jane. The curtain will go

up, and the middle bear won't be a whole bear. This was worse than tripping over her stocking the time she was a butterfly. Maybe Joey and Rufus somehow or another had two heads on. They didn't, though, just their own. Phew, it was warm inside these bear costumes. Jane stood beside Rufus and looked through another small hole in the curtain. Oh! The big door was open! People were beginning to arrive. And what kind of a bear would she be without a head? Maybe she wouldn't be allowed to be a bear at all. But there certainly could not be three bears without a middle one.

"Don't worry," said Rufus, not moving an inch from his spot. "Lend you mine for half the play . . ."

"Thanks," said Jane. "But we all have to have our heads on all through the whole thing."

The Stokes were coming in! Jane felt worried. The only person who might be able to fix a new bear head for her in a hurry was Mama. Oh, if she had only made a couple of spare heads. But Mama wasn't coming yet. Jane resolved to go and meet her. She put on her tam and her chinchilla coat over her bear costume. Then she ran down the three narrow steps into the Hall. She crouched low in her coat in order not to give away the fact that she was clad in a bear costume. Nobody on this side of the curtain was supposed to know what people on her side of the curtain had on until the curtain rolled up. Surprise. That's what was important in a play.

Mr. Buckle was coming in now, walking towards the front row. Jane stooped low, with her knees bent beneath her. In front her coat nearly reached the ground. From the way she looked from the front, few would guess that she was the middle bear. Of course her feet showed. They were encased in the brown costume. But she might be a brownie or even a squirrel.

"Hello, Mr. Buckle," said Jane. "I'm in a hurry . . ."

"Where are you going, middle Moffat," he asked. "Aren't you the prima donna?"

"No. Just the Middle Bear."

"Well, that's fine. The middle Moffat is the middle bear."

"Yes. Or I was until I lost my head."

"Oh, my," said Mr. Buckle. "This then is not your head?" he asked pointing to her tam.

"Yes, but not my bear head. I don't mean bare head Bear head! B-e-a-r. That kind of head."

"Mystifying. Very mystifying," said Mr. Buck-

le, settling himself slowly in a seat in the front row.

"You'll see later," said Jane, running down the aisle.

She ran all the way home. But the house was dark. Mama had already left. And she must have gone around the other way or Jane would have passed her. Jane raced back to the Town Hall. There! Now! The lights were dim. The entertainment had begun. Jane tried to open the side door. Chief Mulligan was guarding this entrance. He did not want to let her in at first. He thought she was just a person. But when she showed him her costume, he opened the door just wide enough for her. The bear costume was as good as a password.

The toe dancer was doing the split. Jane tiptoed up the three steps and went backstage, wondering what would happen now. The show always goes on. There was some comfort in that thought. Somehow, someone would fix her head. Or possibly while she was gone her middle bear head had been found. She hoped she would not have to act with her head bare.

Miss Chichester snatched her.

"Oh, there you are, Jane! Hop into your costume, dear."

"I'm in it," said Jane. "But I can't find my middle bear head."

"Heavens!" said Miss Chichester, grasping her own head. "What else will go wrong?"

Jane looked at her in surprise. What else *had* gone wrong? Had others lost worse than their heads?

"Where's the janitor?" Miss Chichester asked. "Maybe he let his grandchildren borrow it."

Jane knew he hadn't, but she couldn't tell Miss Chichester for she had already blown off. And then Janey had an idea.

"I know what," she said to Joey. "Pin me together." And she pulled the neck part of her costume up over her head. Joey pinned it with two safety pins, and he cut two holes for her eyes. This costume was not comfortable now. Pulling it up and pinning it this way lifted Jane's arms so she had trouble making them hang down the way she thought a bear's should. However, at any rate, she now had a bear head of sorts.

"Do I look like a bear?" she asked Rufus.

"You look like a brown ghost," Rufus replied.

"Don't you worry," said Sylvia, coming up. "You look like a very nice little animal."

"But I'm supposed to be a bear, not a nice little animal," said Jane.

"Well," said Sylvie, "people will know you are supposed to be a bear because Rufus and Joey both have their bear heads on."

So Jane resigned herself to not being a perfect bear. She tried to comfort herself with the thought that she would still be in disguise. She hoped her acting would be so good it would counterbalance her bad head. "Somebody has been eating my porridge," she practiced.

Miss Chichester appeared. "The janitor said 'No,'" she said. She thoughtfully surveyed Jane a moment. "Hm-m-m, a make-shift," she observed. "Well, it's better than nothing," she agreed with Jane. But she decided to switch the order of the program around in order to give everybody one last chance to find the middle bear's real head. She sent Miss Beale out onto the stage. Everybody hoped that while Miss Beale was singing "In an Old-fashioned Garden," the head would appear. But it didn't.

"Keep a little in the background," said Miss Chichester to Jane. "Perhaps people will not notice."

"If I can only see where the background is," thought Jane. For she found it even harder to keep her eyes close to the holes cut in her costume than it had been to the real ones in her regular bear head.

Now the heavy curtain rolled up. It didn't stick halfway up as it sometimes did, and Sylvie, Goldilocks, in a blue pinafore and socks, ran out onto the stage midst loud applause. The play had begun! Sylvie had a great deal of acting to do all by herself before the three bears came home. But she wasn't scared. She was used to being on the stage alone.

Jane's heart pounded as she and Joey and Rufus waited for their cue to come home. If only she didn't trip and turn a somersault, for she really could not see very well. Somehow she managed to see out of only one eye at a time. These eye holes must have been cut crooked. One hole kept getting hooked on her nose.

"Now!" Miss Chichester whispered. "Cue! Out with you three bears."

Joe, Jane, and Rufus, the three bears, lumbered out onto the stage. They were never supposed to just walk, always lumber and lope.

The applause was tremendous. It startled the three bears. The Town Hall was packed. Somebody must have sold a lot of tickets.

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show had gone on, the way people always say they do.

Moreover, the Moffats had nice warm bear pajamas to sleep in for the rest of the winter. Of course they didn't go to bed with the bear heads on. But the rest of the costumes were nice and warm.

## from All-American<sup>1</sup>

WHEN you win, when passes click, when the interference forms smoothly in front and you cut in for five, ten, twenty yards, when the sun shines and your girl's sitting up there in the High School stands and the score mounts, yes, then football's fun. That's grand, that's something like.

But this sort of thing wasn't fun; it was agony. For almost the first time since he began playing football he longed to hear the sound of the whistle.

Of all days to have it rain, the day of the Academy game, the one day we want a good dry field and firm footing! The rain pelted down his neck, oozed into his shoes, made each pad a sodden lump of lead. He looked around. The 16-yard line! One more touchdown and we'll be licked; surely, positively licked. Ruefully he remembered standing on the same spot and saying that same thing to himself before the second touchdown. And the third.

Then the whistle blew.

The team picked itself out of the mud and struggled across the mire into the gymnasium. Into the lockers and clean clothes; relief from that incessant pounding, a chance to rest, to stretch out quietly, to pull themselves together.

The familiar room was warm and dry; in one corner steam was hissing cheerfully from the pipes, and the sight of those little piles of fresh, clean clothes before every locker was comforting. They trooped in, sodden and dripping, saying nothing because there wasn't much you could say, chucking their headgears across the benches in disgust, despondent and disappointed. 19-0. What could anybody say about that kind of a score? To think this was the team that had been talked of as possibly playing an Intersectional game!

"Ok, boys" The coach brought up the rear, slamming the door on an especially severe gust

<sup>1</sup>From *All American*, copyright 1942, by John R. Tunis. By permission of Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

of wind and rain. If he was distressed by the upset he showed no evidence of it. "Ok now, boys, get those clothes right off. Mike! Give us a hand here. Goldman, I'll fix that cut up over your eye. Doc, take a look at Jake's leg."

They hauled off their clothes, wet, soggy, disagreeable to touch, and dropped them to the floor. A small pool of water immediately collected about each pile. Mike and the Doc and the assistant coaches went around rubbing them down, repairing them for the second half. Ah, that's good. Good to be stretched out and relaxed on the hard board while Mike assailed you with the coarse, dry towel. But that score, 19-0. Gee, that's terrible, you can't laugh that off. And we were the team mentioned in the papers as going south to play Miami High. Sure, in all the newspapers!

Slowly they dressed once more. Dry socks, underwear, supporters, pads, pants, jerseys, and shoes. There. That's better. That's something like. The coach came past and slipped to the bench where Ronny was leaning over to tie his shoelaces.

"Ronald!" His voice was low. "What seems to be the trouble out there this afternoon?"

Ronny knew perfectly well what the trouble was but he didn't like to say. So he just kept leaning over his shoes. When he didn't answer, the coach continued in a low voice. "I know it's wet out there; this kind of weather hurts the T-formation the worst way. But from the bench it kinda looks as if the boys aren't together."

Nope, we surely aren't together. Of course we aren't together; how can we be together when some of the crowd are set on something besides winning a football game? That's what he wanted to say, tried almost to say as loud as he could; but it refused to come out. He mumbled something about the bad weather, the storm, the wet ball, the footing.

The coach rose. He clapped his hands. The squad gathered about, everyone's hair still wet and damp. Behind in the rear Mike passed with an armful of soaking uniforms and equipment.

"Boys, this weather is certainly tough. No use talking. I recognize what you are up against out there. The T-formation needs good firm ground to be effective. But I still feel somehow you're better'n what you've shown, and I've still got confidence in you to win, yes, even with this score. I have confidence, that is, if you'll only get going. Nineteen points a lot? Sure. But the

"There's Mama," said Rufus. He said it out loud.

He wasn't supposed to say anything out loud except about his porridge, his chair, and his bed. But anyway he said, "There's Mama." Jane could not see Mama. Lumbering out onto the stage had dislocated her costume so that now she could not see at all. Fortunately the footlights shone through the brown flannel of her costume so she could keep away from the edge of the stage and not fall off.

The Moffats all knew their lines so well they did not forget them once. The only trouble was they did not have much chance to say them because the applause was so great every time they opened their mouths. At last, however, they reached the act about the three beds. An extra platform had been set up on the stage to look like the upstairs of a three bears' house. The three bears lumbered slowly up the steps.

Suddenly shouts arose all over the Hall:

"Her head! Her head! The middle bear's head!"

"Sh-sh-sh," said others. "See what's going to happen."

As Jane could not see very well she had no idea what these shouts referred to. She had the same head on now that she had had on all during this play so far. Why then all these shouts? Or had she really stayed in the background the way Miss Chichester had asked her to, and the audience had only just discovered about the make-shift?

"Oh," whispered Joey to Jane. "I see it. It's your real bear head and it's on the top of my bed post."

"O-o-o-h!" said Jane. "Get it down."

"How can I?" said Joe. "With all these people watching me?"

"Try and get it when you punch your bed," urged Jane.

Joey was examining his big bear's bed now. "Hm-m-m," he said fiercely. "Somebody has been lying on my bed. . . ." But he couldn't reach the middle bear's head. He did try. But he couldn't quite reach it, and there was more laughter from the audience.

Jane pulled her costume about until she could see through the eyehole. Ah, there was her head! On the post of the big bear's bed. No wonder people were laughing. What a place for the middle bear's head. Here she was, without it. And there it was, without her. Jane re-

solved to get it. Somehow or other she would rescue her head before this play was completely over. Now was her chance. It was her turn to talk about her bed. Instead, Jane said:

"Somebody has been trying on my head, and there it is!"

Jane hopped up on Joey's bed. She grabbed her middle bear head.

"Yes," she repeated. "Somebody has been trying on my head," but as she added, "and here it is!" the safety pins that held her make-shift head together popped open. The audience burst into roars of laughter as Jane's own real head emerged. Only for a second though. For she clapped her middle bear head right on as fast as she could, and hopped off the bed. Goodness, she thought, I showed my face and I didn't have any paint on it.

Unfortunately Jane still could not see, for she had stuck her bear head on backwards. But the audience loved it. They clapped and they stamped. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo! middle bear! Big boys at the back of the hall put their fingers in their mouths and whistled. And it was a long, long time before Jane could say:

"Somebody has been sleeping in my bed," and the play could go on. At last Rufus discovered Goldilocks in his little bed, and she leaped out of the window. That was the end of the play, and the curtain rolled down.

When the bowing began, Miss Chichester tried to send Jane in backwards, thinking the back of her was the front of her. Fortunately, Rufus held Jane by one paw, and Joey held the other. So she didn't get lost. And the three bears lumbered dizzily on and off many times, sometimes with Sylvie, and sometimes alone. And somebody yelled for "The mysterious middle bear!" It must have been the oldest inhabitant.

Miss Chichester turned Jane's head around for this bow, and at last Jane really did look like a perfect middle bear. Furthermore, she could see out. There was Mama, laughing so hard the tears were rolling down her cheeks. And there was Nancy Stokes with all the Stokes, and Olga was there. And there was Mr. Buckle beaming up at the stage. Jane bowed and lumbered off the stage. She felt good now. Acting was fun, she thought, especially if you could be disguised in a bear uniform. And this time she had not turned a somersault across the stage as she had the time she was a butterfly. True, she had lost her head. But she had found it. And the

The two teams picked themselves up out of the mud and streamed along behind him, but the fleet colored boy gained with every stride. "Yeah, team! Team, team, team. Yeah, team!" The cymbals clashed and clanged from the High School side of the field. The first chance they had had to cheer since the kick-off.

Now then, we're moving. We're really moving. For the rest of the third quarter the teams slithered up and down the center of the gridiron, both Keith and Ronald punting and handling that juicy sphere as if it were dry and easy to hold. Somehow they managed to cling to the thing.

Then toward the end of the quarter the High School team got moving. A quarterback sneak was good for a long gain. On the Academy 30-yard line, however, they were held for two plays. Third and six. They went into their huddle.

"Ok, gang. 39 on 5 count." He was winded, he puffed hard. This was Meyer's play. They went into formation.

"Hike. 27 . . . 38 . . . 40 . . . hike . . ." He leaned over, his hand on Don's wet rump. The ball came and for once the play was perfectly executed. He faked with his empty left hand to Jake, the halfback, and then in the same motion tucked the ball in Meyer's stomach, continuing back himself as if he were about to throw a pass. Meyer roared off Roger Treadway's end into the secondary, he bounced off Steve, straightarmed Rex Heywood, and carried Keith along on his back almost five yards. The High School stands were jumping, shrieking, yelling.

Then someone shouted. Over to the left in clear territory a figure lay in the wet. Jim had gone down on the play to fake catching a possible forward and draw in one of the defensive backs in their 3-4-2 alignment. Doing so he had turned, slipped, and fallen in the open. When Ronny reached him a group of players was huddled round and he was writhing in agony on the ground.

The Doc rushed up, shoving them aside. He knelt down in a puddle, began feeling of the thigh, the leg, the calf, the ankle.

"Ouch!" Jim perked up. "Ow . . . that hurts . . . ow . . ."

The Doc beckoned to the sidelines. "You lay still, young man. Lay still now, don't move."

Silence came over the field, and Ronny could

hear them from the stands. . . . "It's Jake . . . naw . . . it's Perry . . . no, he's up there . . . it's Jim Stacey."

Two managers ran out with a stretcher. They rolled him over, protesting Ronny saw he was in acute pain. On the bench Jack Train, his substitute, leaned over toward the coach. Then they were carrying Jim from the field.

The team stood disconsolately in the rain. Aw, shoot! Shucks, don't we get the breaks against us! How's that for rotten luck! First this stinking lousy weather. Then we lose our captain, the key of our passing attack, the man who was our best pass catcher.

Jack Train came running on, adjusting his dry headgear. His uniform was unsoiled, his hands were fresh and clean. Ronny looked at him almost with disgust. Heck! What good is he? Couldn't catch a dry ball at ten feet. What use is he on a day like this?

They tried a play. Then another. Something had gone, the mainspring of their nervous energy had snapped, there was no punch left. Baldy was a bear on scouting other teams, and Ronald well knew they'd been told that with Stacey out the High School's passing attack wasn't to be feared. He saw the defensive halfback in one zone slide up. Ideal for a pass if only he had a receiver.

Looking over the situation he called for a fake split buck-end run with Jake carrying the ball. But they were waiting, and although Meyer blocked out the defensive end, the halfbacks smeared the play for a small gain. Third and nine! Shoot! Just as we were rolling, too. That's lousy luck all right. Then he heard a voice at his elbow as they went into the huddle. It was Ned, who never raised his voice, who never spoke unless you spoke to him first—Ned, who was the best defensive end in the State but never carried the ball.

"Ronny. Lemme have a look at that thing. Shoot me that flat pass up the center. I b'lieve I kin hang on to that thing"

Why not? They were stopped now. Why not have a try at it? "Ok, gang Number 46 on 4. Got it, everyone?" He looked round at their muddy faces, heard their panting, saw their affirmative nods "C'mon now. Formation T. 46 on 4 Hike. 27-38-40-39 . . . hike . . ." He leaned over, patting Don on his wet back Here it comes!

Taking the ball, he turned and scuttled to the

test of a player is what he can do when he's tired. This half go out and play the kind of ball you can.'

Then they were outside, out in that deluge once more. Across the way the Academy stands rose in a roar as Keith led his team at the same moment onto the field. Over the end zone was the scoreboard with those dreadful figures staring at them: H.S. 0 Visitors 19.

The ball was low, and from his position Ronald could watch the backs of his teammates converge on the runner, on Keith, no, on Heywood. That big halfback, heavy, powerful, fast, had been slashing holes in their line all afternoon. In the mud and slime he seemed impossible to stop, and Ronny himself had tackled him half a dozen times.

The teams lined up. Heywood took the ball once more for a sizeable gain. But Ronald was noticing something else; he was watching Mike and two others break through and pile up on Keith. It was what they'd been doing ever since the kick-off. To his astonishment some of his teammates hadn't forgotten Goldman's injury of the previous season. They were still trying to pay Keith for his share in it.

There's a guy we don't like, so we'll bang him off at the start. This was their attitude. Ronny knew what they didn't seem to know, that Keith could take it. All the time they were attempting to bang him off, Steve Ketchum and Heywood had plowed through for those touchdowns.

Once again Heywood sliced into the line and out into the secondary. He was nearly clear before he slipped and fell. That's a break, that is. On the next play they made a first down, and then Keith got loose off tackle, his most dangerous run. It was Ronny who, seeing the danger on that sloppy field, managed to knock him outside after a thirty-yard gain. He picked himself up, now as wet and soggy as he had been at the end of the first half.

"C'mon, gang, get in there, get in there and play ball like you can, will ya? Block that end, Mike, watch him every minute; get in low, Jake."

But slowly, surely, steadily, the Academy came toward their goal, toward a fourth touchdown, toward the worst licking the High School had ever taken. Keith charged in low and hard between Vic and Don Westcott who alone seemed to be holding up the center of the line, playing a magnificent defensive game. Don slapped at him and threw him off his stride as

Ronny came running up. The whole play was clear before him. Keith with one arm out, stumbling in the mud; Mike and Dave rushing in hard to fall on him so that if he wasn't knocked out he'd at least know he'd been hit. It made Ronald furious. He closed in, determined not to permit them to get away with it, to block off Dave anyway. He did block him off, and as he did so Mike accidentally slipped and hit him on the chin with the full force of his fist.

He saw stars. When he came to they were standing around in the mud. Doc Roberts was leaning over, wiping his face and holding smelling salts under his nose.

"I'm ok, Doc." He rose unsteadily, feeling dizzy, tried to step out a little, managed to trot a few steps. "I'm ok." But he was not ok, and he was mad clean through. This had to end. One thing or the other. They'd have to quit and play ball—or he would.

"C'm here, gang. This way. Look. This has gotta stop. It's gotta stop or I quit. If you guys don't lay off that bird, I'll leave the field, here, right now, and I'll tell Coach why. C'mon, gang, what say, gang, let's go. Let's forget that stuff. Let's get together, let's play against that crowd there, not against each other."

"You're dead right, Ronald!" Jim Stacey, adjusting his headgear, stepped in toward the center. "Listen, you guys, lay off that fella from now on and play ball. I've been watching you, and Ronny's quite right. We've been playing against each other, not together. Let's all shoot together for the team."

"Ok, Jim"

"All right, Jim-boy."

"Sure, let's go, gang."

"Yeah, let's go."

"All right now, get in there, you guys."

The whistle blew. The teams lined up. Ronald looked around. He was standing on the 8-yard line!

It was raining harder than ever. The Academy leaned over the ball. It was snapped to Heywood, who for the first time started a fraction of a second too soon. The ball was over his shoulder, he stabbed at it, deflected it in the air. A wet figure dashed past and snatched at it in the mist. He had it. Never missing a stride he was five yards down the field before anyone turned.

"Go on, Ned, go on Ned-Boy, for Pete's sake, go on. Don't slip, Ned, go on, Ned!"

form rushing toward him, dodged, and then let loose. This time he had the whole panorama of the play before his eyes.

The pass was true and straight out to the side. This time Ned was there waiting. Gee, if he only holds it. Cool as ice, the end gathered the ball in, turned and cut across the field behind Jake and Meyer. Someone went down. Gosh, is that Ned? Nope, they're still after him. The pursuit continued. Running forward, Ronny could see scattered bodies writhing on the ground in the mud and mist up ahead. Ned was crossing over now, heading for the opposite sideline. He was in the clear.

A wild spontaneous cheer came from his side. From Abraham Lincoln High.

### Little Pear Falls into the River . . . and Decides to Be Good<sup>1</sup>

It was a hot day in the middle of the summer. The sun blazed down on the village and on Little Pear, who was strolling along the street, eating a cucumber. His bare feet shuffled through the thick yellow dust. "Ay-ah," he sighed, "how hot it is!—and where are all my friends?"

The street was deserted, and the reason was that nearly every one was asleep. It was too hot for most people to want to walk about. It was even too hot for the children to want to play. Little Pear, though, always wanted to be doing something "I know what I shall do," he thought. "I shall go and watch the boats on the river." Just then he saw a child trotting around the corner. He felt quite excited for a minute, because he had walked nearly through half the village and had seen only a pig and a few chickens. But when the child came nearer he saw that it was only Big Head's baby brother.

The baby was dressed in a little red apron shaped like a diamond. It was all that he had on, because Chinese babies don't wear very much in the summer. His head was shaved except for a fringe of hair across his forehead. He was trotting along in a great hurry until he met Little Pear, who stopped him. "You must not run away," said Little Pear, and he took the baby's hand and led him back to the home of Big Head, who was leaning against the doorway, fast asleep. Little Pear lifted the little

brother over the doorstep and gave him the rest of his cucumber. "Stay where you are," he said. "You might get lost if you run away." Then he had a good idea. He took the good-luck chain off his own neck and put it around the baby's. "Now you will be safe," he said, and he patted the baby kindly on the head and strolled on, feeling very good. Again he thought, "I shall go to the river and watch the ships," and he started off in the direction of the river.

It was a long way to the river. Little Pear followed the path that cut across the fields, and soon left the village far behind him. The sun blazed down on Little Pear as he pattered along in his bare feet. The fields were as deserted as the village. There was no sound except for the singing of cicadas in the willow trees as he drew near the river.

Presently he stood on the high bank, looking down at the river. First he looked up the river, and then he looked down the river; and all the time he remembered to hold tight to a willow tree with both hands.

The river was swift and muddy. The sun shining on it made the ripples first brown and then blue. The bank opposite Little Pear, like the bank that he was standing on, was bordered by rough-barked willow trees leaning out over the water. Between the banks the boats went busily up and down. Here everybody seemed to be very wide awake. Little Pear thought of the sleepy village he had left and was glad that he had come to the river.

There were all kinds of boats. Big boats with masts and sails and smaller boats with none, and boats with great fishing-nets spread out like huge spider-webs. There were flat boats, too, laden with things to sell. Some had cabbages, and some had rolls of matting, and some had bags that might be filled with all sorts of interesting things, Little Pear thought.

The big boats had eyes painted on them in front, so that they could see where they were going. The owners of these boats were careful not to let anything hang over the edge in front of the eyes, for then the boats could not have seen their way as they sailed in and out among the smaller boats.

Little Pear wished that he had a boat of his own, but he couldn't decide whether he would rather have a small one that he could row, or a larger one that he could push with a pole, or a big one with a sail.

<sup>1</sup>From *Little Pear* by Eleanor Frances Lattimore, copyright 1931, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

rear. Careful. Keep your balance. Watch your feet now. Both defensive halfbacks anticipating a thrust at the line had sneaked up, and Ronald, as he'd been coached, shot the flat pass over their heads into empty territory. Like lightning Ned was there, cutting in with a swerve and taking that greasy thing in midair on the dead run. He had it! Doggone, he had it! He was off. Ronald could see nothing more, for he himself was buried under a swarm of resentful tacklers.

He didn't need to see. When he shook himself free and got the mud out of his eyes, Ned was standing beneath the goal posts and the umpire had his hands high in the air.

Another touchdown. 19-13.

You can't keep a good gang down! The band blared, squeaky noises came from the brasses, but the cheering drowned everything. Yeah, team! Team, team! Watch it, Meyer. Watch it, boy; watch that kick, it's terribly important. He remembered the coach's words as the ball was snapped back to Bob who always held it for Meyer. Give Meyer a chance, and he'll come through. He's only missed two out of the last fourteen tries.

Swell! Atta boy, Meyer, great work, Meyer. 19-14 Great work for you too, Ned. Boy, you're hot! "C'mon now, gang, c'm here, c'm over here. Look. We got eight minutes to score. Let's get this one for Jim, gang. You bet, we'll get this one for Jim."

It was the longest eight minutes of his life. In that eight minutes he lived a hundred lives, died and was reborn a hundred times. In that space of time he suffered ages of agonies. For he was weary, beaten, his whole frame ached as it had never ached before, he seemed to be carrying around twenty pounds of heavy mud. Each step was a horrible effort. Every fall, every tackle, jarred him badly.

They kicked off, downed them close to their goal line, held them after several rushes, and got the ball near midfield.

"Ok, gang, here's our chance. Here's where we go 48 on 3. Hip-hip. Hike." Get outa the way, Mike, get outa the way or I'll tattoo your backbone. No gain? Shoot! Third and eight to go.

He punted, poorly. But then their own line held and once more the Academy was forced to kick back. Now he gave everything he had, a delayed straight buck, a short forward to Ned which was knocked down, a forward to Bob

which was incomplete. Again he had to kick.

For the third time they held despite the fierceness of the Academy attack. Dusk was descending fast in the wet and mist. You could hardly see the opposite goal posts. He called for 80. It was one of the coach's favorites, a play in which he handed the ball to Meyer who tossed it to Bob, the man in motion. His play which had been stopped three times in the first half for no gain went for twenty yards. They were creeping along, well in enemy territory now; but time was running out fast.

A fumble! A fumble! The ball slithered through the mud. He could see it, in the open. Then a figure shot toward it almost parallel to the ground. How he ever managed to hold that greasy object Ronny never knew. There he was, however, with the ball in his stomach when six men piled on top.

Ned LeRoy! Good boy, Ned! You saved us that time. Gee, that's great work, Ned, that's really super. They went into the huddle. Why not? Sure it was growing dark. Sure the ball was wet and hard to handle. But why not try it?

The defensive backs were sneaking up again, so he called for a pass down the sidelines in which the left end ran down and cut over to take the ball. Number 86 on 3. He leaned over, panting. Whew! Gosh, I'm all in. The words of the coach came suddenly to mind.

The test of a player is what he can do when he's tired.

He looked at them. Meyer on his knees in a pool of water. Ned with his mouth open and his white teeth showing. Don hardly able to stand up, Mike with the gash in his forehead open and bleeding, everyone done in, beaten, exhausted. But the test of a player is what he can do when he's tired.

"Look, gang, let's give 'em one good one for Stacey. What say, hey, gang . . . let's give 'em this one for Jim. One good play. Everyone in it. 86 on 3. Dave, watch that defensive halfback. Jake, fade out a little more. End around direct pass. Everyone got it? Remember, they're scared now. They're plenty worried. And they're just as tired as we are. Ok, gang, let's make this a good one for Jim."

They went into formation. He leaned over, took the ball, and faded slowly back. Meyer and Bob and Jake ran out ahead to form interference; Ned slipped around and then, going ahead, cut toward the sidelines. Ronald saw a

## The Fourth Day<sup>1</sup>

sun had been down for a long time, and the night was very dark, when at last Little Pear saw ahead of him the dim outline of the village. Dogs barked at him as he approached. "Don't bark!" he cried. "Don't you know me? This 's Little Pear!" When he reached his own gateway the stone lions on either side of it looked very fierce. "They are roaring now, not laughing," he thought, and he said aloud, "Don't bite me. This is Little Pear!" He ran across the courtyard to the house. "Open the door!" he cried. "It is Little Pear!"

Then the door was flung open, and "It is Little Pear!" cried his mother and Dagū and Ergu all at once, throwing their arms around him.

How glad Little Pear was to be at home again! And how glad his family were to see him! "Where have you been?" they cried. "We have hunted for you all afternoon, and the men are still out with lanterns, looking for you."

Little Pear told them all that had happened, how he had left the village and had gone to the river, and how he had fallen into the river and been rescued. Then his mother prepared some hot food for him while Dagū put the kettle on to boil and Ergu sped away to tell all the village that Little Pear had returned.

Soon there was the sound of many feet in the courtyard, and then the tiny room was filled with people. There were Little Pear's father and the other men who had been searching with him for Little Pear. There was Ergu, out of breath and with shining eyes. There were all the nearest neighbors and best friends. There was Big Head, looking very excited, and Big Head's baby brother, eating a tang-hulur. He still had the good-luck chain around his neck.

"You may keep the chain," Little Pear told him, "for you are very little and something might happen to you. But I am a big boy, and I am never going to run away again."

Then everybody was very happy. They patted Little Pear on the head, and the baby brother gave him the rest of his tang-hulur.

"We all loved you very much when you were naughty," they said, "but we shall love you even more if you are good."

"I will always be a good boy, now," Little Pear promised, nodding his head very hard. Ergu looked at her small brother and suddenly felt rather sad.

"Little Pear is growing up," she said.

IN the morning those sounds were gone from the wind. It was blowing with a steady wailing scream and the house stood still. But the roaring fire in the stove gave hardly any heat.

"The cold is worse," Ma said. "Don't try to do the housework properly. Wrap up in your shawls and keep Carrie with you close to the stove."

Soon after Ma came back from the stable, the frost on the eastern window glowed faintly yellow. Laura ran to breathe on it and scratch away the ice until she made a peep-hole. Outdoors the sun was shining!

Ma looked out, then Mary and Laura took turns looking out at the snow blowing in waves over the ground. The sky looked like ice. Even the air looked cold about that fast-blowing flood of snow, and the sunshine that came through the peep-hole was no warmer than a shadow.

Sidewise from the peep-hole, Laura glimpsed something dark. A furry big animal was wading deep in the blowing snow. A bear, she thought. It shambled behind the corner of the house and darkened the front window.

"Ma!" she cried. The door opened, the snowy, furry animal came in. Pa's eyes looked out of its face. Pa's voice said, "Have you been good girls while I was gone?"

Ma ran to him. Laura and Mary and Carrie ran, crying and laughing. Ma helped him out of his coat. The fur was full of snow that showered on the floor. Pa let the coat drop, too.

"Charles! You're frozen!" Ma said.

"Just about," said Pa. "And I'm hungry as a wolf. Let me sit down by the fire, Caroline, and feed me."

His face was thin and his eyes large. He sat shivering, close to the oven, and said he was only cold, not frost-bitten. Ma quickly warmed some of the bean broth and gave it to him.

"That's good," he said. "That warms a fellow."

Ma pulled off his boots and he put his feet up to the heat from the oven.

"Charles," Ma asked, "did you—Were you—" She stood smiling with her mouth trembling.

"Now, Caroline, don't you ever worry about me," said Pa. "I'm bound to come home to take care of you and the girls." He lifted Carrie to his knee, and put an arm around Laura, and the

<sup>1</sup>From *On the Banks of Plum Creek* by Laura Ingalls Wilder, copyright 1937, Harper & Brothers.

Finally Little Pear decided that what he would like most of all to have when he grew up would be a fishing-boat. For then he could catch fish for his meals and take fish to the city to sell, and what fun that would be!

Little Pear held tight to the willow tree and gazed at the ships going up and down. He was wishing that he would grow up soon, when suddenly he saw, drawing nearer and nearer, the loveliest kind of boat on the river. It was a houseboat!

"That is the kind of boat I should like to have," thought Little Pear, as he watched it drawing nearer and nearer. It was a long flat boat with a real little house on it, with a hole in the ceiling for the smoke to go through, and paper windows. A man was walking up and down the side of the deck, shoving with a long pole.

Little Pear looked admiringly at the clothes hanging out to dry and watched the children playing about the deck, and the boat sailed gayly along until it was quite close to Little Pear.

Suddenly one of the children saw him. He called to his brothers and sisters, and they all flocked to the edge of the boat and waved to Little Pear as he stood alone on the bank. It made him feel very happy, and without thinking he let go of his tree to wave back. *Slip*, went his feet on the steep bank—*slip*, *slide*—and *plop*, into the river fell Little Pear! . . .

The brown water whirled round and round him in circles as he rose to the surface, choking and sputtering. "Ay-ah!" cried the children on the boat "He is drowning, he is drowning!" For Little Pear could not swim, and the swift current was carrying him away from the bank. He splashed around wildly with his arms and was about to sink again when the man on the boat rushed forward and reached out his pole. "Catch hold!" he cried.

Little Pear couldn't hear what the man said, for there was water in his ears. He could scarcely see the man, for there was water in his eyes! He couldn't say anything himself, for he had swallowed so much water—but he splashed around with his arms—and—he caught hold of the pole! Then he held on tight while the man pulled him to the side of the boat and lifted him safely to the deck.

For some time he lay there, wondering to himself whether he was drowned or not, and thinking that perhaps he would never see his

family again. Then he opened his eyes and saw above him a circle of faces. Here he was on the houseboat, and here were the children who had waved to him and the man who had saved him. There was the kindly face of the mother, too, who had hurried out of the little house to see what had happened.

Little Pear smiled at them, and they all exclaimed over him, saying what a wonder it was that he wasn't drowned; and they admired his flowered jacket and the green string around his pigtail.

"Will you stay with us?" asked the children.

But their mother said, "No, this little boy comes from the shore, and his family will wonder where he is. He must go home when we come to the next landing-place."

The boat sailed on down the river. Little Pear sat drying in the sun, while the children sat around him in a circle, telling him about their life on the river, and asking him eager questions about the land. "We have never lived on the land," they told him, "because this boat has always been our home." Then Little Pear told them about his village, and about his family and friends and his canary. As he talked he began to think how glad he would be to see them all again. But the boat sailed on down the busy river, taking Little Pear farther and farther away from home.

When they finally reached the next landing-place, the houseboat stopped and Little Pear was set ashore. He felt very sorry to say good-by to his new friends. He climbed the path up the bank and watched until the boat had sailed on, far down the river. The children were still waving to him, but Little Pear held tight to a tree with both hands, because he didn't want to fall into the water again. The boat disappeared around a bend in the river, and Little Pear started for home.

Away across the fields the sun was setting. Little Pear walked on, and on, and on. The way home was long, as the boat had sailed a mile or two down the river. "Ay-ah," thought Little Pear, "soon it will be dark!" And he hurried his tired feet along more quickly. He wished that he might meet another kind man like his friend who had taken him to the city. But the path along the river bank was deserted, the fields were deserted, and it seemed as though in all the world there was nobody except Little Pear.

Little Pear walked on, and on, and on. The



warm cap with earlaps, and that extra pair of thick socks, Caroline.

"When I woke up I could hear the blizzard, but faintly. There was solid snow in front of me, coated over with ice where my breath had melted it. The blizzard had filled up the hole I had made when I fell. There must have been six feet of snow over me, but the air was good. I moved my arms and legs and fingers and toes, and felt my nose and ears to make sure I was not freezing. I could still hear the storm, so I went to sleep again.

"How long has it been, Caroline?"

"Three days and nights," said Ma. "This is the fourth day."

Then Pa asked Mary and Laura, "Do you know what day this is?"

"Is it Sunday?" Mary guessed.

"It's the day before Christmas," said Ma.

Laura and Mary had forgotten all about Christmas. Laura asked, "Did you sleep all that time, Pa?"

"No," said Pa. "I kept on sleeping and waking up hungry, and sleeping some more, till I woke up just about starved. I was bringing home some oyster crackers for Christmas. They were in a pocket of the buffalo coat. I took a handful of those crackers out of the paper bag and ate them. I felt out in the snow and took a handful, and I ate that for a drink. Then all I could do was lie there and wait for the storm to stop.

"I tell you, Caroline, it was mighty hard to do that, thinking of you and the girls and knowing you would go out in the blizzard to do the chores. But I knew I could not get home till the blizzard stopped.

"So I waited a long time, till I was so hungry again that I ate all the rest of the oyster crackers. They were no bigger than the end of my thumb. One of them wasn't half a mouthful, and the whole half-pound of them wasn't very filling.

"Then I went on waiting, sleeping some. I guessed it was night again. Whenever I woke I listened closely, and I could hear the dum sound of the blizzard. I could tell by that sound that the snow was getting thicker over me, but the air was still good in my den. The heat of my blood was keeping me from freezing.

"I tried to sleep all I could, but I was so hungry that I kept waking up. Finally I was too hungry to sleep at all. Girls, I was bound and determined I would not do it, but after

some time I did. I took the paper bag out of the inside pocket of my old overcoat, and I ate every bit of the Christmas candy. I'm sorry."

Laura hugged him from one side and Mary hugged him from the other. They hugged him hard and Laura said, "Oh Pa, I am so glad you did!"

"So am I, Pa!" said Mary. They were truly glad.

"Well," Pa said, "we'll have a big wheat crop next year, and you girls won't have to wait till next Christmas for candy."

"Was it good, Pa?" Laura asked. "Did you feel better after you ate it?"

"It was very good, and I felt much better," said Pa. "I went right to sleep and I must have slept most of yesterday and last night. Suddenly I sat up wide awake. I could not hear a sound.

"Now, was I buried so deep in snow that I couldn't hear the blizzard, or had it stopped? I listened hard. It was so still that I could hear the silence.

"Girls, I began digging on that snow like a badger. I wasn't slow in digging up out of that den. I came scrabbling through the top of that snow bank, and where do you suppose I was?"

"I was on the bank of Plum Creek, just about the place where we set the fish-trap, Laura."

"Why, I can see that place from the window," said Laura.

"Yes, and I could see this house," said Pa. All that long, terrible time he had been so near. The lamp in the window had not been able to shine into the blizzard at all, or he would have seen its light.

"My legs were so stiff and cramped that I could hardly stand on them," said Pa. "But I saw this house and I started for home just as fast as I could go. And here I am!" he finished, hugging Laura and Mary.

Then he went to the big buffalo coat and he took out of one of its pockets a flat, square-edge can of bright tin. He asked, "What do you think I have brought you for Christmas dinner?"

They could not guess.

"Oysters!" said Pa. "Nice, fresh oysters! They were frozen solid when I got them, and they are frozen solid yet. Better put them in the lean-to, Caroline, so they will stay that way till tomorrow."

Laura touched the can. It was cold as ice.

"I ate up the oyster crackers, and I ate up the Christmas candy, but by jinks," said Pa, "I brought the oysters home!"

other around Mary. "What did you think, Mary?"

"I thought you would come," Mary answered.

"That's the girl! And you, Laura?"

"I didn't think you were with Mr. Fitch telling stories," said Laura. "I—I kept wishing hard."

"There you are, Caroline! How could a fellow fail to get home?" Pa asked Ma. "Give me some more of that broth, and I'll tell you all about it."

They waited while he rested, and ate bean broth with bread, and drank hot tea. His hair and his beard were wet with snow melting in them. Ma dried them with a towel. He took her hand and drew her down beside him and asked:

"Caroline, do you know what this weather means? It means we'll have a bumper crop of wheat next year!"

"Does it, Charles?" said Ma.

"We won't have any grasshoppers next summer. They say in town that grasshoppers come only when the summers are hot and dry and the winters are mild. We are getting so much snow now that we're bound to have fine crops next year."

"That's good, Charles," Ma said, quietly.

"Well, they were talking about all this in the store, but I knew I ought to start home. Just as I was leaving, Fitch showed me the buffalo coat. He got it cheap from a man who went east on the last train running, and had to have money to buy his ticket. Fitch said I could have the coat for ten dollars. Ten dollars is a lot of money, but—"

"I'm glad you got the coat, Charles," said Ma.

"As it turned out, it's lucky I did, though I didn't know it then. But going to town, the wind went right through me. It was cold enough to freeze the nose off a brass monkey. And seemed like my old coat didn't even strain that wind. So when Fitch told me to pay him when I sell my trapped furs next spring, I put that buffalo coat on over my old one."

"As soon as I was out on the prairie I saw the cloud in the north-west, but it was so small and far away that I thought I could beat it home. Pretty soon I began to run, but I was no more than halfway when the storm struck me. I couldn't see my hand before my face."

"It would be all right if these blizzard winds didn't come from all directions at once. I don't know how they do it. When a storm comes from the north-west, a man ought to be able to go straight north by keeping the wind on his

left cheek. But a fellow can't do anything like that in a blizzard.

"Still, it seemed I ought to be able to walk straight ahead, even if I couldn't see or tell directions. So I kept on walking, straight ahead, I thought. Till I knew I was lost. I had come a good two miles without getting to the creek, and I had no idea which way to turn. The only thing to do was to keep on going. I had to walk till the storm quit. If I stopped I'd freeze."

"So I set myself to outwalk the storm. I walked and walked. I could not see any more than if I had been stone blind. I could hear nothing but the wind. I kept on walking in that white blur. I don't know if you noticed, there seem to be voices howling and things screaming overhead, in a blizzard?"

"Yes, Pa, I heard them!" Laura said.

"So did I," said Mary. And Ma nodded.

"And balls of fire," said Laura.

"Balls of fire?" Pa asked.

"That will keep, Laura," said Ma. "Go on, Charles. What did you do?"

"I kept on walking," Pa answered. "I walked till the white blur turned gray and then black, and I knew it was night. I figured I had been walking four hours, and these blizzards last three days and nights. But I kept on walking."

Pa stopped, and Ma said, "I had the lamp burning in the window for you."

"I didn't see it," said Pa. "I kept straining my eyes to see something, but all I saw was the dark. Then of a sudden, everything gave way under me and I went straight down, must have been ten feet. It seemed farther."

"I had no idea what had happened or where I was. But I was out of the wind. The blizzard was yelling and shrieking overhead, but the air was fairly still where I was. I felt around me. There was snow banked up as high as I could reach on three sides of me, and the other side was a kind of wall of bare ground, sloping back at the bottom."

"It didn't take me long to figure that I'd walked off the bank of some gully, somewhere on the prairie. I crawled back under the bank, and there I was with solid ground at my back and overhead, snug as a bear in a den. I didn't believe I would freeze there, out of the wind and with the buffalo coat to keep warmth in my body. So I curled up in it and went to sleep, being pretty tired."

"My I was glad I had that coat, and a good

There had been branches of evergreen in the chapel sometimes. Perhaps if she hunted at the edge of the tall woods behind the spring she might find some red partridge berries to bring back to the children. It was bad luck if you gave nothing on Christmas, and they need not know the reason for such a gift.

As she turned into the wood path behind the house she looked across the water to Sunday Island. White places showed on the cleared field round the Jordan house where the snow remained, and the trees above it on the upper pasture where she and Aunt Hepsa had gathered bayberry looked more dark and bristling than ever in the winter twilight. She was glad that a curl of smoke rose from the chimney. Aunt Hepsa must be cooking supper, she told herself, and she paused to send her a Christmas wish across the water.

"I wonder if she's begun her new quilt yet?" she thought as she struck into the wood path. "She had the indigo dye Ethan brought her all ready to make a blue pot."

There were no red berries under the snow in the clearing by the spring where she had hoped to find them, so she went on farther along the blazed trail. It was very still there, with only a light wind stirring the spruce and fir boughs overhead. The light stayed longer there than she had expected, for the snow helped prolong the winter afternoon. Sometimes she stooped to gather cones, taking care to shake off the snow as Dolly Sargent had bidden her. The cold was intense, but her blood was quick and the old homespun cloak and hood enveloped her warmly. There was no sound except her footfalls in the snow. A sudden impulse came upon her to sing one of the carols which she knew the Sisters in the convent must even then be teaching other voices to raise.

She set down the half-filled basket of cones, folded her hands piously under the cloak, and began the first simple little chant that she had ever learned.

*"Noel—Noel—Noel!"*

Her own voice startled her in the stillness. Then at the sound of the familiar words she grew confident and began the one that had been Grand'mère's favorite because she also had sung it when she was a girl in the little village where she had lived.

*"J'entends le ciel retentir  
Des cantiques des Saints Anges,*

*Et la terre tressaillir  
Des transports de leurs louanges.  
C'est l'Oinct qui devoit venir,  
Il est déjà dans ses langes.  
Miracle! prodige nouveau,  
Le fils de Dieu dans le berceau!  
Mais plus grand prodige encore,  
Ce grand Roi, que le ciel adore,  
Doit expirer sur un poteau.  
Noël! Noël! Noël!"\**

As she sang there in the deepening twilight, she felt strangely comforted. The French words that had lain so long forgotten welled up out of her mind as easily as if she had been with the Sisters in the candle-lit chapel and not alone these thousands of miles away in a snowy wood.

"Noël! Noël!" she cried once more to the ranks of spruces, and then as she turned to retrace her steps something dark and swift moved towards her from behind a tree trunk.

There was not time enough to run away. The words were hardly cool on her lips before he stood beside her—a tall Indian in skins, with a musket that went oddly with his fringes and bright feathers. So silently did he come that not a twig snapped under his foot. He seemed not to dent the snow as he moved over it. His eyes showed bright in the copper of his skin, and a deep scar ran crookedly across one cheek. He came so close that she saw it plainly, and yet she could not move so much as an inch. Her feet seemed rooted in the snow, and if her heart continued to beat, she could not feel it. For what seemed like ages he continued to regard her fixedly with his black, unblinking eyes, while she waited for him to seize the tomahawk from his belt and make an end of her. But he did not move to do so. Instead, his lips parted in a queer smile.

"Noël!" he said, pronouncing the word carefully in a deep, guttural voice. "Noël!"

Marguerite felt her heart begin to beat again, though her knees were still numb and she continued to stare at him incredulously. Surely this

\*This old carol may be freely rendered as follows:—

I hear the heavens resound  
To such angelic song  
That trembling stir the ground,  
While rolls the news along—  
The Heavenly Child is found,  
To Whom all praise belong.  
Oh! wondrous miracle,  
A God in his cradle!  
Yet must we wonder more,  
Thus King the heavens adore  
Must die upon a cross.

## from Calico Bush<sup>1</sup>

It was a fairly warm day for December and she went out with Debby to watch him split the wood. It was pleasant to see his ax come down so swift and sure each time, and sometimes when he paused to rest he would talk to her for a minute or two. The baby was so well wrapped in a woolen shawl that she looked like a brownish caterpillar with a pink nose and tufts of light hair showing at one end.

"What time of year is it now?" Marguerite asked as Ira stopped to draw his sleeve across his streaming forehead.

"Let's see," he answered going over to the post where he still made his daily notches, dividing the months by means of long horizontal strokes. "Well, I declare, if it ain't got to be the middle o' December! Yes, tomorrow's the seventeenth, time I missed that beaver cap I promised Abby."

"Is it for Christmas?" asked Marguerite.

But he shook his head. "No," he said. "Our folks don't hold with such foolishness. We went to meetin' back in Marblehead on Christmas, I recollect, but there was a Dutch boy I knew told me how they had all kinds o' doin's where he come from."

"You mean, it will be no different from other days?" Marguerite's eyes grew wide with disappointment. "No carols, and no cakes, and no gifts from one to another?"

"I guess that's about right," he told her and went on with the chopping.

If Ira gave her no encouragement in Christmas festivities she knew it would be useless to expect more of Dolly and Joel Sargent. She tried to put the thought from her mind, but as each day came bringing it nearer she found herself remembering more and more the happy preparations for it she had helped to make at home. She dreamed of the Christmas cakes Grand'mère had always baked with such pride, of the seeded raisins and the pickled nut-meats stirred ceremoniously in the rich batter. And then there were the carols, with the Sisters in the convent beating time and making sure that not a single "Noel" was left out when all their pupils' voices were lifted together. She tried to tell the children of the tiny carved statues of the Virgin and Joseph and the little Christ Child

in the manger, with cattle and sheep and shepherds all painted as perfectly as life, that were brought out on Christmas Eve in the candle-lit chapel. Unfortunately Dolly had overheard part of this recital and had chided her roundly.

"I'll thank you to keep your Popishness to yourself," she had told her. "We may be in too God-forsaken a spot for a meetin' house, but that's no reason to put ideas in the children's heads."

And so it came to be Christmas Eve in the log cabin on Sargents' point with no smell of spice cakes, or incense, or candles, and none to feel the lack of them but Marguerite Ledoux.

She had been out to the post herself that noon, counting the month's notchings to be sure. There could be no doubt—tomorrow would make twenty-five. She would not have missed the holiday preparations so much, she thought, if she might have gone over to see Aunt Hepsa; but she knew there was no chance of this with such a high sea running and snow left in patches from last week's fall. It was rare, Joel had said, to have much fall near the sea. A bad winter ahead, Seth Jordan had predicted, and it looked as if he were right. Frost had covered the little square panes of glass with such feathery patterns, it required much breathing and scratching to make even a little hole to see out. Marguerite was tired of doing this. The room was almost dark, but she knew that outside there was still half an hour or so left of twilight. She went over to the pegs behind the door and took down the brown cloak and hood.

"What are you doin'?" Dolly asked her as she had her hand on the door.

"I'm—I want to bring more cones," she hazarded, grasping at the first idea that came into her head. "There are not so many left in the basket."

"Well, all right, then," Dolly told her, "only don't fetch in the wet ones that make the fire smoke. Pick 'em from underneath. No, Jacob," she added at a question from the child, "you can't go along—it's too cold."

Marguerite buckled on the shoes Aunt Hepsa had given her, tied on her cloak, and went out basket in hand. Once she shut the door behind her some of the depression which had weighed upon her spirit all day left her. It was impossible to feel so sad out in the snow with the pointed trees and all their shiny dark-green needles. They smelled of Christmas to her.

<sup>1</sup>From the chapter "Winter" in *Calico Bush* by Rachel Field, 1931. By permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

"So have I," Flat Tail said. "I'm on my way to the river to find a new home, because the fire burned the forests and we can't live at the pond any more. My name is Flat Tail," he added.

"My name is Splasher," the other beaver told him. "They call me that because I can make a bigger splash with my tail than any other young beaver at our pond. My father says he can hear my tail slap the water even when he is far back in the forest cutting down trees."

Flat Tail looked at his companion approvingly. "Let's see you do it," he said.

Splasher slipped quickly into the water and swam toward the middle of the pool. "Now watch!" he cried.

With a little rolling motion he dived straight down out of sight, and as he dived, he gave the water such a whack with his tail, that a white spray flew up all around him and fell back upon the shore, like rain.

"That's fine!" Flat Tail called, hurrying down the bank, and in a moment or two he was swimming in the cool water of the pool.

For a time they played together; diving, splashing, and chasing each other about. But at last, when they had had enough of play, they left the pool and, climbing high on the bank, they lay down under a projecting ledge of shale.

From the doorway of their shelter they could see the red rim of the sun going down behind the blackened hills. It was a lonely spot; except for the low murmur of the stream as it ran down a shallow rapids below the pool, no sound broke the stillness. And the two young beavers closed their eyes and slept.

When Flat Tail awakened, the stars were thick in the sky, and he could see their reflection shining up at him out of the clear water. He was wide awake now and he was hungry. Half rising to his feet, he gently poked the sleeping Splasher with his nose. "Wake up," he said.

Splasher stirred a little. "What's the matter?" he asked sleepily.

"Wake up," Flat Tail repeated, "and let's talk about our journey. Let's talk about going to the river. You are going to the river, aren't you, Splasher?"

"I don't know where I'm going," Splasher answered, "but I know it's some place far away.

All the beavers at our pond are going there. We came away together after the fire, but I got tired and went to sleep behind the fallen tree, and they went on and left me. I hope I can find them again."

Getting to his feet, he stretched himself lazily. "I'm hungry," he said, "aren't you?"

"Yes," Flat Tail told him. "I haven't had anything to eat since I left our pond, except a few water plants that I found along the way. Let's go down by the stream and maybe we can find—"

He stopped suddenly as a long, clear howl came to them across the darkness. Instantly the two young beavers crept farther back under the ledge, and lay close together on the ground.

"It's a coyote!" whispered Flat Tail. "Listen!"

Again they heard the voice. It was nearer this time and, crouching low, they made themselves as small as they could against the wall of their little cave.

The coyote! It was not the first time they had heard his voice in the night and, young as they were, they knew he was a creature to be feared. No one was more cunning than he. No one could more surely follow tracks or more swiftly hunt down his prey.

"What shall we do?" Splasher whispered. "He will find our tracks along the stream and follow them."

"We must go into the pool," Flat Tail said, getting to his feet. "We must hide from him as we hid from the fire, deep down under the water."

Hurrying out of the cave they ran quickly to the pool. Flat Tail had never been so frightened. The voice of the coyote was even more terrifying to him than the fire had been; for then he was in his own pond that he knew so well, and his father and mother were with him. Now, he and Splasher were here alone.

For a time they swam about under the water, but after awhile Flat Tail climbed cautiously out onto the bank and hid himself in a dark grotto that the stream had made under the roots of a dead tree.

The moon had just risen, and from his hiding place he could see for some distance up and down the lonely shore. Once he saw Splasher's head bob out of the water, but he did not speak to him and was glad he had not when, a moment later, a form came out of the darkness and trotted along the opposite shore of the pool.

must be a miracle, more extraordinary than any bestowed on Saint Catherine or Saint Elizabeth! A savage had come out of the woods to greet her in her own tongue on Christmas Eve! She forced herself to smile back and answer him.

His words were meager and hard to catch, but she made out from them and his signs that he had lived with the French in Quebec. He was bound there now, or so she guessed from his pointing finger. She could not tell how many of her words he understood, but whenever she said "Noël" his eyes would brighten with recognition and he would repeat it after her. "Les Pères Gris," he told her, had cured him. He touched the scar as he spoke and crossed his two lean forefingers to make a cross.

It was almost dark now; only a faint light lingered between the spruces. Pumpkin barked in the distance and Marguerite knew she must hurry back lest they grow alarmed. What would they think, Joel and Dolly Sargent and the rest, if they should come upon her there in the woods holding converse with an Indian? Prompted by an impulse she pulled the cord out from under her dress and jerked off Uncle Pierre's gilt button. It glittered in her hand as she held it out to the tall figure before her.

"Pour un souvenir de Noël," she said as she laid it in his hand before she turned and sped off towards the clearing.

Her heart was still pounding as she came out of the woods and in sight of the log house. Pumpkin bounded to meet her as she paused to put back the cord and its only remaining treasure. She had not thought to make such a Christmas gift, but surely she could not have done less. She could not but feel that somehow it was a fortunate sign, this strange meeting. Perhaps Le Bon Dieu had Himself arranged it that she might be less lonely on Christmas Eve. But she knew there must not be a word of it to the rest. She would never be able to make them understand what she scarcely understood herself. As for Caleb, she could well guess what he would say and that he would think ill of her ever after.

Dolly Sargent scolded her roundly for staying away so long.

"I declare you deserve a beatin'," she told her hotly, "strayin' so far at this time o' night. I vow Debby's got more sense 'n you show sometimes."

There was no mention made of Christmas

next day save that Joel asked a lengthier blessing over their breakfast cornmeal than was usual with him. But Marguerite no longer minded. Had she not had her miracle the night before?

## Flight<sup>1</sup>

FOR a time Flat Tail forgot that he was leaving the only home he had ever known. He forgot that now, since his father and mother were not with him, he must look out for himself.

It was a hard journey down the fire-swept valley, and as the day wore on he grew very tired. Sometimes he picked his way slowly among the boulders in the bed of the shallow stream, and sometimes he followed the unfamiliar shore.

Often he stopped to search for some bit of green that might serve him as food, or to gaze at the ruined fields and forests, wondering about all the creatures who had lived there.

But the other beavers pushed steadily on, and at last Flat Tail found that he was traveling alone.

And now he thought of the island in the pond that he had left, and of the river toward which he was traveling; and he wished he had not fallen so far behind the others.

Toward dusk he came to a deep pool. He would rest here for awhile, he thought, and swim. But just as he was about to step into the water, he raised his head and sniffed the air eagerly.

Flat Tail's nose never made a mistake, and now it told him there was another beaver near. "Where are you?" he called at once.

"Here I am," a voice answered, and a young beaver, about Flat Tail's own size, scrambled over a fallen tree that lay across the stream just below the pool.

For a moment they stood sniffing each other cautiously, neither of them speaking. Then, as though satisfied that everything was all right, they turned and walked together a little way along the shore.

"Why were you hiding?" Flat Tail asked.

"I wasn't hiding," the young beaver told him. "I was resting behind that fallen tree. I have traveled a long way today."

<sup>1</sup>From *Flat Tail* by Alice Crew Gall and Fleming Crew, 1935. By permission of Oxford University Press, New York.

On his way in Joel stopped only long enough to press his face hard against Little Bub's nose.

At the door Mistress Chase handed him a kettle of hasty pudding and a long stick.

"Hang the kettle over the fire," she said, "and stir and stir until I tell you to quit."

"Hasty pudding!" muttered Joel to himself. "It bears me how it got its name!"

Evans strutted into the room just then. "Chase!" he called to the miller. "I'll wager a barrel of cider that my horse can move that pine log to the sawmill in two pulls. But first, pour me a mugful. I'm dying of thirst."

At sound of Evans' voice Joel almost upset the pudding.

"Boy!" shrilled Mistress Chase. "Mind your work. Hasty pudding's not meant to feed the fire!"

For once Joel paid no heed. He tore across the room and grabbed Mister Evans by the sleeve.

"Mister Evans!" he cried. "Little Bub's been dragging logs all day. You hain't going to enter him in the pulling bee?"

Evans gulped his drink. "Go away, Joel," he snapped in annoyance. "When I want advice, I'll not ask it of a whippersnapper."

The little horse meanwhile was feasting upon all the fresh green shoots within his range. They tasted juicy and delicious after the business of logging.

One by one the stars dusted the sky. Nathan Nye brought out a lantern so Mister Evans could see to fasten his tugchains to the log.

Joel followed Evans about like a puppy. Evans stood it as long as he could. Finally he shoved the boy aside.

"A nettle hain't half as pesky as you," he growled. "Stand back or I'll clout you."

Now Evans was stepping off the ten rods from the log to the mill.

"Want to give up before you start?" scoffed Nathan Nye.

"No such a thing. Why, I'm actually ashamed to ask my horse to pull such a little log. Now if you'll find me three stout men to sit astride the log, why then I'll ask him."

Joel bit his lips to keep from crying out. He hid his face in the horse's tangled mane. "Oh Bub, my poor little Bub," he choked, "none of the big creatures could budge the log, and now with three men besides. Oh Bub, Bub..."

Laughter rang up and down the valley. "Ho-ho-ho—that pint-sized cob to pull such a big log! Ho-ho..."

Nathan Nye had no trouble at all in finding three brawny volunteers. As the men straddled the log, they joked and laughed and poked one another in the ribs.

"Look to your feet, men!" warned Evans. "This horse means business. Something's got to give."

Nye held the lantern aloft. It lighted the circle of faces. They were tense with excitement. Some of the men were placing last-minute bets with one another. Some were whistling like mad. Others twirled their whips nervously. Joel was white with anger.

Nye repeated the warning "Look to your feet, men!"

Someone tittered

Evans felt to see if the little horse was hitched securely. Then, "Git up!" he roared, as he slashed the whip across Bub's back.

The little horse galvanized into action. First, he backed ever so slightly. Then his powerful neck bent low, as if to give every muscle a chance to get going. Now he was straining forward. You could see his muscles grow firm and swell up like rubber balls. You could see the white foam come out on his body.

Joel, too, was drenched with sweat. The silence was heavy, like a gray blanket.

At last there was the groaning of chains. The log trembled. Slowly it moved. It kept on moving. It was more than halfway to the saw!

The little horse stopped. His sides were heaving. Joel breathed in and out with the horse. He felt as if his lungs were on fire. There was no sound at all from the crowd. Overhead a baby robin, trying to get settled for the night, chirped insistently.

Now Evans commanded again. And again the horse went through the same motions. He backed slightly. He bent his head. He strained every muscle. Again the log was moving, moving, moving. This time it did not stop until it reached the sawmill!

And still nobody had made a sound. The three men were as silent as the log they sat upon. Only the horse's breathing pierced the quiet.

Then everyone began shouting at once. "Hooray for Morgan's colt! Hooray! Hooray! Hooray for the big-little horse."

Like a gray shadow, the coyote came, his ears held forward to catch some telltale sound and, lowering his nose to the ground, he ran excitedly up and down, giving quick little yelps as he ran.

Flat Tail scarcely dared to breathe. "He has found our tracks!" he thought, in despair.

Along the bank ran the coyote, and straight to the little cave where the two young beavers had been such a short time before.

Not there! He gave a howl of disappointment and, going back to the water again, he walked up and down the shore, growling angrily.

For a long time he did this while, from the cave across the pool, Flat Tail watched him.

But after a while he turned and trotted away, and once more the young beaver breathed freely.

"He's gone!" he said when next Splasher's head appeared above the water. "He's gone, Splasher!"

As soon as they dared they continued their journey. They had escaped from the hungry coyote, but they were not yet out of danger.

With their ears strained for any sound and their eyes searching sharply among the shadows, they traveled swiftly and silently down the stream.

At dawn they came to a small water hole and lay down to rest.

"We had an adventure, didn't we, Splasher?" Flat Tail said.

"Yes," Splasher answered, "and I was frightened. We've traveled a long way, and I think we must be almost to the river, don't you?"

### The Pulling Bee<sup>1</sup>

By the time spring came on, Joel and Miller Chase were friends. In the late afternoons, while Mistress Chase napped, the miller often gave Joel a whole hour to himself.

One afternoon early in May Joel stood looking out the inn door. Suddenly the yard began filling with big-faced dray horses and oxen, and men were gathering about a huge pine log.

"Is it a pulling bee?" asked Joel, turning to Miller Chase quickly.

"If Nathan Nye is about, looking mighty

important and bossy, you can be expecting most anything. He was ever good at fixing contests."

"He's there!" exclaimed Joel. "And he's got tug chains."

"H'm," mused the miller, tapping his cheek, "if I was a boy now with no chores to do, it seems like I'd skedaddle right out there."

Joel grinned over his shoulder, and in no time at all he was helping Mister Nye fasten the tug chains to a big dappled mare.

The mare's owner, Abel Hooper, was too busy boasting to the farmers to be of any help. "A mighty lucky thing I'm first," he was saying, "Lucy and me'll pull this here piece a kindling to the sawmill in one pull. Then you can all hyper on home whilst it's still daylight."

But Abel Hooper had to eat his words, for Lucy barely caused the log to tremble.

One after another, the beasts had their turn, and no matter how whips cracked or masters yelled, the log seemed rooted to the earth.

"Folks, I guess it's up to the oxen now," Nathan Nye was saying, when into the yard came Evans riding Little Bub.

"Hey, Nathan," called Evans, "what's all the hullabaloo?"

"'Tis a pulling bee," answered Mister Nye, "but can't none of the beasts pull that there pine log to the sawmill in three pulls or less. Just look at Hooper's big mare! She's roaring from the try. And Biggle's gelding—his muscles are still a-hitching and a-twitching. Even Ezra Wiggins' beast failed. None of them can budge the log."

"None except my one-horse team!" crowed Evans.

Joel held his breath. He felt scared right down to his toes.

The crowd snickered. Then it hooted.

"That little flea? Why, he's just a sample of a horse. He ain't no bigger than a mouse's whisker! Besides, his tail is so long, he's liable to get all tangled up and break a leg."

Evans looked over the horseflesh. "Little Bub," he said slowly, "ain't exactly what you'd call a dray horse, but whatever he's hitched to generally has to come the first time trying."

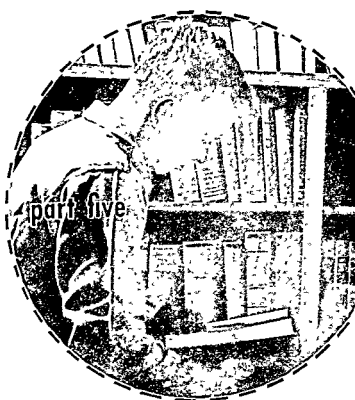
"Take him on home," scoffed Nathan Nye. "When we have a contest for ponies, we'll be letting you know."

Above the man-talk Joel heard the sharp voice of Mistress Chase. "Boy! You come here!"

<sup>1</sup>From *Jatten Morgan Had a Horse* by Marguerite Henry, 1945. By permission of Wilcox and Follett Company.



# Stranger than fiction



Biography  
Of many things

ILLUSTRATIVE SELECTIONS FROM

Young Hickory  
Abe Lincoln Grows Up  
Hop, Skip, and Fly  
Our Small Native Animals

Joel had his arms around Bub's neck. His whole body ached, as if he had moved the log himself. "It's over! It's over! You did it, Bub! You did it!" he kept repeating. Then he sobbed a little from exhaustion and relief.

The horse lipped Joel's cheek and neck. He almost tried to say, "It's all right, Joel; don't be taking it so hard." He was steaming and tired, but it was good to be near the boy again. It was good. He nickered softly.

troubled, and far-sighted the founding fathers were when they molded a bewildered young nation into its present form. The biography series record these men and their successors. Children in the United States are learning their history in terms of the men who made it.

Best of all, the children are enthusiastic about biography. In one small city there is a boys' club named for its favorite series of biographies. In another, the children bring in a publisher's list of new titles and harry the librarian for the latest books. Decidedly, these are books adults should know about.

The problem is to keep up with them.

## What is biography?

The heroes of recent biographies, for adults as well as children, are different from those of a few decades ago. Readers want and find in many of these new books an honest reporting of a man's life. In this age of science, we believe not only in biological evolution but also in the evolution of human character, for better or for worse. We are accustomed to see goodness, wisdom, and strength growing slowly out of a muddle of weaknesses and confusions, some of which are never eradicated. Or we are not surprised to see, sometimes, weakness growing weaker in spite of fine, lovable qualities, and folly degenerating into vice. The course of a man's life depends, we realize, both upon his inherent capacities and upon his surroundings. Today we are interested in this combination of heredity and environment and in its influence on a man's tendencies and drives and on his will to discipline and forge himself into a certain pattern.

These are some of the elements which we look for in modern biographies. What were the forces that produced such great but dissimilar persons as Tom Paine, Franklin, Mozart, Lincoln, Mme. Curie, and Pavlova? What did they have to start with in the way of brains, health, beauty, family? What were their weaknesses or limitations? Did they or did they not

Where a librarian or a book reviewer used to receive a single biography to consider, she now receives a box of twenty or more from one publisher. One series becomes well established and four more spring up. The multiplicity of biographies is so overwhelming that the suspicion grows that they cannot all be excellent. Some might even be slipping back into the old stereotypes. At any rate, it behooves the adults who guide children's reading to know what constitutes sound biography, so that they can pick out the best examples from the numerous books in this important field of children's reading.

overcome these? What part did education, social position, people, circumstances, or the times have to do with making them what they eventually became? These are some of the questions we carry to a biography and expect to have answered, not in terms of a saint or a superman but in terms of a human being like ourselves, struggling through weaknesses, obstacles, and confusions toward particular goals.

One reason for the improvement of biography is that in the last several decades there have been some systematic and critical appraisals of the field. Intelligent criticism helps to formulate standards and to inspire and direct creative enterprise. Modern biography owes much not only to some of the great models of the past but to such evaluations as Harold Nicolson's *The Development of English Biography* (1928) and André Maurois' *Aspects of Biography* (1929). The book by Mr. Nicolson is an exceptionally sound appraisal of biography, and Mr. Maurois' book adds the French point of view, which is important also. If we are to choose biographies for children and young people today, we, too, should know something about the criteria of good biography, formulated by these specialists.

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines bi-

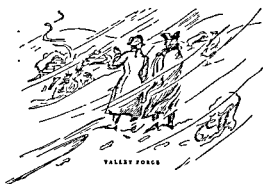


Illustration from Genevieve Foster's  
*George Washington's World*,  
 Scribner, 1935 (book 7½ x 10)

*With a few lines Genevieve Foster manages to suggest some grim details. The three stout backs turned to a swooping wind, the small fire, and the crouching men tell much of the bleak misery of winter at Valley Forge.*

For a long time it was difficult to find any biographies for children that were not stereotyped, stuffy, and unpopular. Then in the nineteen thirties some excellent biographies appeared in the juvenile field, and by the next decade biography had become an important and popular branch of children's literature. Now it is flooding the market and threatening to capture young readers so completely that they will have no time or taste for any other kind of reading. This is a remarkable phenomenon, due in part to the rise of exceptionally successful biography series. The series in turn seem to have grown out of our deep feeling and jealous concern for our democratic way of life. Grown-ups see it threatened by hostile ideologies, and they want their children to know what democracy is and what it cost our early settlers. Above all, they want children to know just how courageous,

Then, as if Victoria were thinking aloud, he briefly and tenderly reviews her life, going back to the little girl in "sprigged muslin, and the trees and the grass at Kensington." Maurois uses this same device differently but just as dramatically in relating the possible "dreams" of the old and ailing Disraeli. So Jeanette Eaton also uses it in her account of the dying Washington in *Leader by Destiny*. It is a legitimate device, but when it is over-used it may become a not too subtle method of influencing the opinions of the reader.

### Sources

For many people, one of the most important tests of a good biography is the accuracy and thoroughness of its documentation. Mr. Nicolson in *The Development of English Biography* insists that a biography should be as scrupulously documented as history. Stra-

chey's *Queen Victoria* is a model in this respect, for every incident and every description is conscientiously documented in the footnotes.

Juvenile biographies are usually not documented. Although children may never read footnotes, nevertheless, careful documentation is a guarantee to adults of the authenticity of the material, and it could serve a similar purpose for older children and young people. A respect for objective, verifiable reporting can be started with any child old enough to read substantial biographies. Perhaps if children were taught this respect for truth and accuracy, as adults they would be more critical of prejudiced or fictionalized biographies. A continuous acknowledgment of sources is a guarantee to the reader of the historical accuracy and the objectivity of a biography.

## Biography as the individual

### Typed characters unacceptable

All of us are familiar with the older biographies which presented a man as a type—Washington the ever truthful, Lincoln the sad, and Benjamin Franklin the thrifty. Franklin seems to have been cast in the rôle of the *thrifty* merely because he wrote a number of wise saws on the desirability of this virtue. As a matter of fact, he sent home from England a continual stream of handsome and extravagant presents, such as silver-handled knives, fine china, a whole box of table glass, flowered dress goods "at nine guineas," silk blankets "of a new kind," silver candlesticks, carpets, even a harpsichord for Sally.<sup>1</sup> These gifts would indicate a happy spender to whom cost was of small moment. Later, in France, his bills for his wine cellar were lavish, and he finally remarked plaintively that frugality was "a virtue I never could acquire in myself."<sup>2</sup> So "perhaps," as the biographers say, his adages on thrift were

reminders for his cheerfully unthrifty self, as well as for the rest of the world.

Franklin is indeed a good example of a figure almost spoiled for young people because he has been typed as a paragon. Today in the new biographies young people and even children may catch a glimpse of the real Franklin—witty, worldly, urbane, adored by the ladies and adoring them in turn, equally at home in the wilderness and in the court, a scientist, a man of letters, a diplomat, an amateur musician, lazy and prodigiously industrious—in short, a composite of strength and weakness on a grand scale, with a tremendous brain directing the whole. To have made Franklin, of all men, into the image of a stuffy prig was a crime. To rediscover the whole man and reveal him to this generation, as Carl Van Doren has done, is a crowning achievement of modern biography.

### The whole man

Carl Van Doren's *Benjamin Franklin* is an example of the way in which modern historical research, in the hands of skillful writers,

<sup>1</sup>Carl Van Doren, *Benjamin Franklin*, pp. 276-277.  
<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 637.

ography as "the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature." Here, as Mr. Nicolson points out, are the three points of emphasis: *history*, that is, facts authentic and verifiable; an *individual*, not a

paragon or a type; *literature*, that is, a conscious work of art. This description with some amplifications not only defines biography, but suggests the standards by which we should judge it.

## Biography as history

### Authenticity

If a biography is the history of a person's life, it should be as accurate and authentic as research can make it. The author must read the complete literary works of his hero and study everything he has created—music, paintings, or sculpture. The biographer must examine any letters or diaries or journals left by the man. His personal papers in turn must be compared with the comments of contemporaries as recorded in their books or letters or diaries. If these seem contradictory, the biographer must discover what the attitude of the contemporary was—friendly, worshipful, or definitely antagonistic. This may involve consulting the available writings of still other contemporaries who knew both men and who, in turn, left records of their relationships. The mass of personal papers and documents which a conscientious modern biographer goes through in order to be even reasonably certain of the authenticity of his material is staggering. Esther Forbes, in her meticulous research for her *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, gathered enough information about the lively antics of Boston's apprentices to give body to a second book, *Johnny Tremain* (p. 438). The limitations of biography had prevented her from using her imagination or guessing at some of the things that happened in the life of Paul Revere; so *Johnny* was the fictional vent for all her wonderings about those busy apprentices.

### Objectivity

Esther Forbes' experience in writing the life of Paul Revere suggests another test for biography as history. A biographer is not free to

give his own opinions or to present an interpretation for which he has no evidence. His hero's deeds should speak for themselves. If they seem ambiguous, the author may speculate about the contradictory evidence, but he may not take sides or tell the reader what to think. Was Sam Houston completely honest and disinterested in his dealings with the Indians and with his Cherokee foster-father? Marquis James, in *The Raven*, a biography of Sam Houston, never tells us how he regards Houston's actions. He presents the evidence and lets the reader draw his own conclusions. And readers of *The Raven* differ in their judgment of Sam just as Sam's contemporaries themselves disagreed. James, then, is objective in presenting Houston's life. He scrupulously refrains from imposing himself or his judgments on the reader.

It also follows that the biographer may report only those words and thoughts which the hero has recorded or is known to have spoken. Some biographers have got around this strict limitation by saying, "Perhaps he thought..." or "Perhaps he meant what he said, who knows?" Lytton Strachey uses this device repeatedly in his *Queen Victoria*. When the gouty old king whom she was to succeed asked the young Victoria for her favorite tune, she replied without a moment's hesitation, "God Save the King." This, Strachey tells us, "has been praised as an early example of a tact which was afterwards famous." Then he adds cryptically, "But she was a very truthful child, and perhaps it was her genuine opinion." He closes his book with a dramatic use of this device. Describing the dying queen, old, blind, and silent, he suggests that she *may perhaps* have recalled her past.

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## Biography as literature

If biography is a branch of literature, then it, like any other work of art, should be a consciously planned composition. It has a subject, a theme, unity attained through that theme, style, a pattern of the whole, and a pattern of the parts. These may not be evident to the casual reader, but if the life is written with any skill, they are there.

### Theme and unity

Biography like history is based on documented facts. No liberties may be taken with these facts; no flights of fancy are permissible. The biographer begins by assembling all the documents and examining all the evidence. But the modern biographer feels that he should not give his accumulated research to the reader in its endless and often trivial details. He must choose those which he thinks will most truly reveal the man as the author has come to know him. It is in this matter of selection and organization that the biography ceases to be purely history and becomes a work of art. For the author, through his reading of all the sources and weighing of all the evidence, gradually develops a theme. Around this theme he organizes the facts so that they not only reveal the man as he has come to see him, but so that they also give unity to that life and to the book. If he selects his theme before he examines the evidence, he will write a biased, subjective biography. If he sees no theme emerging out of the chaos of events,

so effectively that he won the jury to his side and later won the right of the jury to have its decisions upheld in the English courts.<sup>2</sup> Little incidents and big ones which reveal the spirited human being who will not be downed and who travels his own unique way bring the individual to life for the reader. Revealing details are the very essence of good biography.

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The biographer, like the portrait painter and the landscape painter, must pick out the essential qualities in the whole subject which he is contemplating. By such a choice, if he can make the choice without weakening the whole, he is very precisely performing the artist's function. (p. 50)

Maurois speaks too of the symmetry of certain lives and remarks that even Byron's life, with all its incidents, "must also have its hidden unity; the problem is to find it." So the author of a biography must first saturate himself with facts; then he must synthesize these facts until the hero begins to emerge as an integrated human being in spite of contradictions, with purposes and a direction of energies that give wholeness and significance to the life. In this unity of a life the author finds his theme, and around the theme composes his book.

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is destroying the typed hero of the past and portraying the whole man. The book that is generally considered the greatest biography in the English language, James Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), is as modern in this respect as Strachey's *Queen Victoria* (1924). But despite Boswell's early demonstration of what a good biography should be, the typed life somehow or other became firmly established in the years before Strachey, and of course in its juvenile form was thoroughly disliked by youngsters.

But, it is objected, while it may be all right to give adults the whole truth about a man—his vices, the tragedies in his life, his failures—still children cannot and should not have the complete account. This may be true. The younger children are, the less they are able to understand or accept the ultimate tragedy of a life. A child's life of Mozart<sup>1</sup> terminates with his first adult triumphs, and a biography of Shelley<sup>2</sup> for the teen age concludes before the tragedies and the scandals begin. Neither record is falsified; it just does not continue long enough to catch up with sorrow. *The Raven*, Marquis James' adult biography of Sam Houston, tells about Sam's taking an Indian mate and abandoning her when it was convenient. *Six Feet Six*, the James version of this biography for children, omits such episodes. This certainly is not presenting the whole man. But while adults are entitled to a complete picture, children are not yet ready for it. Juvenile biographies should be true as far as they go, with no falsifications, but the whole adult truth may not be within the children's range of comprehension and judgment.

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In the past, biographies written for young people failed at precisely this point. They told children about the large affairs in which their heroes played a part but neglected to give any account of the individual man with his amusing idiosyncrasies, peculiar bents, and special talents which made him unique among other men. Children delight in Franklin's account of himself as a boy floating in a pond on his back propelled by a kite;<sup>3</sup> or Davy Crockett crossing an icy river in December, sometimes in and sometimes out of the water, but managing to keep dry his keg of gunpowder, a bundle, and his gun, "Betsey";<sup>4</sup> or Haydn cutting off the pigtail of a fellow chorister;<sup>5</sup> or Lewis and Clark, the intrepid explorers, feeling uncomfortable when the Indians at a ceremonial feast served a stewed dog, reminding them of their own Spot;<sup>6</sup> or Lincoln holding a child upside down to make tracks on the ceiling as a joke on the stepmother he dearly loved, a joke he righted with a fresh coat of whitewash.<sup>7</sup> Such escapades are intelligible to children and bring the great ones within their range.

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<sup>4</sup>Constance Rourke, *Davy Crockett*, pp. 94-97.

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man moving through great and troubling events. No effort has been made to cut his nature to fit any simple scheme of what a good man ought to be. Here, as truly as it has been possible to find out, is what Franklin did, said, thought, and felt. Perhaps these things may help to rescue him from the dry, prim people who have claimed him as one of them. They praise his thrift. But he himself admitted that he could never learn frugality, and he practised it no longer than his poverty forced him to. They praise his prudence. But at seventy he became a leader of a revolution, and throughout his life he ran bold risks. They praise him for being a plain man. Hardly another man of affairs has ever been more devoted than Franklin to the pleasant graces. The dry, prim people seem to regard him as a treasure shut up in a savings bank to which they have the lawful key. I herewith give him back, in his grand dimensions, to his nation and the world. (pp. viii-ix)

Then, on the last page, the theme emerges as clearly as a final note from a trumpet. Franklin, says the author, "seems to have been more than any single man: a harmonious human multitude." There it is, the core of the man's life—his remarkable diversity, all the interests and powers of the man in balance, "a harmonious human multitude." It is a great theme around which Van Doren, with his tireless research and delightful style, has built a notable biography whose unity also centers in diversity.

Turning to children's or young people's biographies, we often find the theme in the title—*Carry On, Mr. Bowditch* (Nathaniel Bowditch), *He Heard America Sing* (Stephen Foster), *Invincible Louisa* (Louisa M. Alcott).

In *Leader by Destiny*, Jeanette Eaton's life of George Washington, she shows how over and over again circumstances and the times interfered with Washington's life and called him to other ways of living. He might have been a homespun frontiersman, playing a gallant part no doubt, but his brother's death gave him Mount Vernon and turned him into a country gentleman. This rôle was forwarded by his neighbor's wife, the lovely Sally Fairfax (destiny again), who taught him the manners and ways of gentlemen.

Then the country squire was called upon for soldiery and more soldiery, and finally he was made the head of the Continental Army. Seven long years of campaigning followed, with his whole heart yearning for the gracious life of Mount Vernon. Then came peace and a chance to realize his desires, but destiny called him once more, this time to the presidency, the gravest responsibility an American had ever faced. Washington played a great part in every rôle he undertook, but it would seem that these rôles were not of his own choosing. He would have been a leader in any situation, but destiny called him to national greatness.

Not all biographies adhere so closely and obviously to theme and unity as those just cited, certainly not the early examples of biography. But modern biographies seem to be following this pattern more and more, and juvenile biographies, too, are often organized around a central theme which gives a dramatic unity to the book.

### Style and pattern

If biography is to be judged as literature, it must also have a pleasing style. As one authority has said, style is "the auditory effect of prose." The prose must be beautiful to read and it must be appropriate to the subject matter and to the mood of the story. Read aloud this excerpt from James Daugherty's *Daniel Boone*:

When Daniel came back to the Boones' farm in the Yadkin valley, he up and married his Irish sweetheart, Rebecca Bryan, whose family had settled in the valley near them. There was a hilarious shindig with the Carolina fiddles shaking down the moon. When the logs were all cut for the house-raising, the neighbors for miles around took a hand. By sundown they stuck a pine tree on the ridgepole of a brand new cabin in the clearing and ate and danced till morning. (p. 21)

Or this brief picture of the old man:

He roused himself and went to the fire where he was roasting a venison steak on the ramrod of his gun. Some friends were coming and he

is a legitimate one, is that this makes the narrative more dramatic. They contend that anyone who starts to relate a hero tale to a child invariably begins to tell what the people thought or said. It is true that the moment we start some episodes about George Washington or Abraham Lincoln we find ourselves saying, "So George thought to himself . . ." or "When Sarah Bush saw her new step-son, Abe, she liked the boy at once, and said to him . . ." Of course such methods bring the scene more vividly to life for a child. Furthermore, the author of such fictionalized conversations would justify them by saying that while they are not to be found in so many words in any record, they have basis in known facts. Certainly whether fictionalized dialogue is justified or not, we find a great deal of this sort of thing in most biographies written for the young, and since the authors give no sources it is impossible for a casual reader to tell whether there is a sound reason for such free interpretation, or whether the author is merely being as dramatic as his fancy dictates.

If these juvenile biographies carried footnotes and source references, we could tell which authors are doing a scholarly piece of work in a partially fictionalized vein, and which ones are simply using the hero as a basis for a creative story. There are two hybrids in this field: First, there is *fictionalized biography*, in which the facts are documented and only a few liberties are taken, such as occasional dialogue for which there is no actual record. Second, there is *biographical fiction*, which takes a historical character as a basis for a story semihistorical in nature.

### Fictionalized biography

Most of our juveniles belong to the first class. That is, they are based on careful research and are fictionalized only to the extent of casting known facts into dramatic episodes complete with conversation. For instance, Elizabeth Janet Gray, in relating the moving quarrel between Admiral Penn and his young son lately turned Quaker, begins it with the

old Admiral exploding wrathfully, "...three people you may *not* thee and thou—the King, the Duke of York, and myself." This speech is much more exciting than the plain statement, "The Admiral objected to his son's Quaker use of thee and thou." The quarrel continues the next day, climaxing in the Admiral's terrible threat:

"I am going to kneel down and pray to God that you may *not* be a Quaker, nor go ever again to any more of their meetings."

And William's frenzied reply:

"Before I will hear thee pray after any such manner," he cried, "I'll leap out of the window."

It was a high window, too, and according to Elizabeth Gray, William was saved only by the happy interruption of one of his father's most elegant friends come to call. Since Elizabeth Gray is a scrupulous research scholar, she probably had some sort of documentary evidence for this quarrel. She does, for instance, give the Admiral's actual letters to William summoning him home for this grim conference. Assuming then that there is a historical basis for the scene, we accept the dialogue, which certainly heightens the drama, the words fairly crackling with suppressed emotion.

Perhaps fictionalized biography is the finest pattern of biography for young people and children. We find it again in the biographies written by Clara Judson, James Daugherty, Jean Latham, and Carl Sandburg. There is no doubt that dialogue based on facts, when it is written by a scholar and an artist, brings history to life, re-creates living, breathing heroes, and makes a dramatic impression on children.

### Biographical fiction

What should or should not be classified as biographical fiction is more open to argument. But *Columbus Sails* by C. Walter Hodges will serve as a distinguished and clear-cut example of biographical fiction at its best. The great admiral's story is told in four

of the individual parts. Another fine example of style and pattern in biography is Carl Sandburg's *Abe Lincoln Grows Up*, adapted from the first twenty-seven chapters of his book for adults, *The Prairie Years*. Picking the book up anywhere, you discover that it reads aloud so easily and naturally you just keep reading. Of Tom Lincoln, the father, Sandburg writes:

He wasn't exactly lazy; he was sort of independent, and liked to be where he wasn't interfered with. . . . He was a wild buck at fighting, when men didn't let him alone. A man talked about a woman once in a way Tom Lincoln didn't like. And in the fight that came, Tom bit a piece of the man's nose off. . . . Though he was short spoken, he knew yarns, could crack jokes, and had a reputation as a story-teller when he got started. (pp. 12-13)

Of Nancy Hanks, Sandburg writes differently:

The Lincolns had a cabin of their own to live in. It stood among wild crab-apple trees.

And the smell of wild crab-apple blossoms . . . came keen that summer to the nostrils of Nancy Hanks.

The summer stars that year shook out pain and warning, strange laughter, for Nancy Hanks (p. 30)

Then, when she dies of the milk-sickness he says:

So the woman, Nancy Hanks, died, thirty-six years old, a pioneer sacrifice, with memories of monotonous, endless everyday chores, of mystic Bible verses read over and over for their promises, and with memories of blue wistful hills and a summer when the crab-apple blossoms

soms flamed white and she carried a boy-child into the world. (p. 87)

The wild crab-apple blossoms mark the completion of the pattern.

A different use of pattern is well illustrated by the opening chapter of Elizabeth Janet Gray's *Penn*. She describes Penn's father, young Captain Penn, already rising in the English navy, in which eventually he becomes Admiral; his wife with her Irish estates; the king with his two sons, James and Charles; a shoemaker named George Fox; an eight-month-old heiress, Gulielma Springett; and the lusty baby, William Penn.

And all these scattered lives were to play their part in the life of the baby who slept and cried and ate and slept again in sight of the steep walls of the old, grim Tower, into which had gone, down the centuries, many prisoners, young and old, frightened and defiant; and from which fewer had come out. The Tower too had its part. (p. 7)

Here, we are told, are all the threads of the story, all the important elements in the life of the baby, who grew to be the man of whom it was said later, "the world has not yet caught up with William Penn." There in that first chapter are the small patterns which will make up the large pattern.

These examples show how biography, although as scrupulously documented as history, may become in the act of composition a branch of literature. Yet, good adult biographies are as sound sources for facts as histories. This may also be true of biographies for children and young people but with certain differences.

## Biographical types for children

As we have already seen, juvenile biographies differ from adult biographies in several important respects. First, biographies for children are usually not documented. Second, these biographies may not be complete accounts of the men—particularly if the man's life includes objectionable incidents or many unrelieved tragedies.

In the third place, biographers for the young usually feel that it is legitimate to cast known facts about an episode into actual dialogue and to interpret the thoughts of their characters. In other words, they put sentences into their heroes' mouths and thoughts into their heads for which there is no actual documentary evidence. Their excuse, and it

with the saints and the reformers, the emancipators and idealists, has been rather generally allocated to the periods of late adolescence and to maturity.

However, the pre-adolescent child loves action and yearns to know everything there is to know about his special heroes who are doers. From explorers to his favorite baseball stars, the child wants to know what they did and how they did it. Moreover, through fairy tales and stories of everyday action, he has been arriving gradually at a few broad standards of right and wrong. He may not understand self-abnegation or altruism, but he knows all about fair play, honesty, justice, bravery, and kindness. These simple ethics of action he respects and will uphold stoutly. Furthermore, he admires men who embody these virtues. In the beginning he may not always distinguish between real and imaginary heroes. Jack the Giant Killer and Columbus, Mollie Whuppie and Joan of Arc may be much alike in his mind, but the stories about these people are laying a necessary foundation for his understanding of behavior and standards of morality.

Biography for children, then, begins simply with heroes of action. Mothers and Sunday school teachers have long known this and have told children some of the rousing biographies from the Old Testament—Moses, Abraham, Jacob, David, and above all, Joseph. These are great biographies with all the dramatic appeal of a story. Such men the child can understand because they are men of deeds.

Teachers in the elementary schools, even those working with the five-year-olds, launch a few biographies also. When the older children celebrate Washington's or Lincoln's birthday, the small children are sure to ask, "Who was Washington?" or "Who was Lincoln?" and the experienced teacher obliges with an episode or two from those lives or a brief summary of the whole life.

A few years back, many teachers would tell such stories as the cherry-tree incident. Poor Washington is all too often fixed in the

children's minds with that incredible myth concerning the cherry tree, sponsored by Parson Weems. This priggish tale has probably done more than anything else to damn Washington in the minds of normal children, or at least to remove him from reality. Children who have encountered some deviousness, not to say bald untruth, in the adults with whom they live are not to be deceived by this impossible Georgie, not for a minute. They suspect if he ever said such a thing ("Father, I cannot tell a lie"), that he was just putting up a front of some kind. Maybe he belonged to one of those odd families who agree not to spank you for your crimes if you "come clean." In which case Georgie was just taking an easy way out of the first-class spanking he so obviously deserved. Any way you look at that old tale, so villainously cut out of whole cloth by the pedantic parson, it is no way to introduce George Washington—the best wrestler, the highest jumper, the hardest riding youngster in his district. Children deserve a better start with the founding fathers than such myths.

### **Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire**

George Washington  
Benjamin Franklin  
Abraham Lincoln  
Columbus

It is something of a shock to discover in the D'Aulaires' fine picture-book life of *George Washington* for the youngest children this repellent phrase, "He learned to be good and honest and never tell a lie." Fortunately, the D'Aulaires give other and more winning pictures of Washington. The children will probably forgive the authors this absurdity and remember George racing his horse to school with his hard-riding playmates. There is the mature George in the making, a glimpse of the hunting squire and the tireless general who was to be.

The picture-book biographies of Ingri and Edgar d'Aulaire are a real contribution to the youngest. They are large books, eight by eleven inches, copiously illustrated with

parts, each from the standpoint of a supposed eyewitness. A monk at La Rabida tells of the events leading up to the sailing of the *Pinta*, the *Nina*, and the *Santa Maria*. A vagabond sailor relates the harrowing details of the voyage and also the settlement at La Navidad. And one of the Indian converts, brought back to Spain by Columbus, describes the closing tragedy. This is a beautifully written and dramatic story; it brings Columbus vividly to life. No adult would mistake it for biography, but young readers take it much as they take the historically accurate account in Armstrong Sperry's *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus*. Young readers accept the books in the Childhood of Famous Americans series as true biographies, although libraries rightly classify them as fiction. Each is predominantly an imaginative re-creation of a childhood, written to fit a theme.

The reason for sometimes cataloguing as fiction Jean Lee Latham's Newbery Medal book, *Carry On, Mr. Bowditch*, is not so clear. In her acceptance speech the author defines her book as fictionalized biography. It probably makes no more use of imaginary dialogue than Elizabeth Janet Gray's *Penn*, which is listed as biography. *Mr. Bowditch* does include around a dozen imaginary characters, such as members of ships' crews, but the au-

thor adds that "there are about four dozen historical characters...handled with accuracy as to time, place, and personality." (*Horn Book*, August 1956) Certainly this book, based on all the historical documents available, is a magnificent record of a little-known genius. In purpose and effect on the reader it is biography.

These distinctions among different types of historical literature are not deeply important to the children's use of the books. When young people read biographical fiction, they might be warned, "This is the way it may have happened, but history does not tell us for sure." And when they read biography or even fictionalized biography, it may be said, "In so far as the author can find historical records, this is the way it *did* happen."

Briefly, the chief distinctions between good biographies for adults and those for children are that, in the latter, sources are rarely stated, unsavory episodes are usually omitted, and recorded events are more likely to be enlivened with imaginary dialogue. On the whole, however, modern biographies for children represent scholarly research and conscientious retelling of events in a dramatic style. Such characteristics make these books one of the finest modern contributions to children's literature.

## Biographies for young children

It has been generally assumed that there is little interest in biography before adolescence, but, as a matter of fact, when the small child says, "Daddy, tell me about when you were a little boy," he is asking for biography. It is true that young children are not interested in certain kinds of biographies. When the small boy asks for a story about his father's boyhood, he wants to hear what he *did*, not how he conquered his bad temper or became interested in science and finally decided to make it his lifework. For the young child is not ready for career stories unless they are strictly careers of action. Nor is

he concerned with character development—why a man behaves as he does, or how he grows gradually in self-discipline, unselfishness, and nobility. Least of all is the child able to appreciate or even follow an account of a man's pursuit of an abstract idea or of an ideal. Biographies concerned with such heroes are not for young children. *Penn*, with his deep concern for Quakerism and social ideals, is a character for the older children. It is difficult to make Jefferson come to life for children because he was so predominantly a man of ideas. It is for these reasons that biography, which has so often been concerned



**Alice Dalgliesh**  
**The Columbus Story**

The text, less than thirty pages long, of this story-biography is vividly alive and re-creates with simple dignity the boyhood of Columbus. Leo Politi's brilliantly colored illustrations are perhaps the finest he has made. Since the book carries Columbus only through his triumphant first voyage, with none of the tragedy of the later years, it can be read aloud to children as young as five or six. Third-graders can read it for themselves. With Miss Dalgliesh's gift for making the past convincingly alive for young children (see Chapter 16), it is logical that she should also succeed in the task of writing biography for the youngest children.

**Clyde Robert Bulla**  
**Squanto, Friend of the White Men**

Squanto, the Indian friend of the Pilgrims, is an almost mythical figure to most Americans. Children will be thrilled by his amazing life. He was taken to England in 1605 and lived there for eight years. Then he returned to this country with John Smith only to be captured and sold to Spain by slave hunters. In Spain he was rescued by the friars and returned once more to his native land. This is an incredible tale beautifully told by Clyde Bulla, who has a gift for writing easy-to-read books that are never commonplace. His historical tales have a pleasant lilt and swing and substantial content. *Squanto* has the same virtues, and a fascinating hero as well. He appears again in *John Billington, Friend of Squanto*, the story of a spirited boy who got the Pilgrims and himself into considerable trouble.

**Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher**  
**Biographies of musicians**

The happy collaboration and later the individual work of Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher have resulted in a series of biographies of musicians for younger children, about seven to ten, which have proved unusually

popular. The books follow a similar pattern—family, birth, amusing or extraordinary episodes of childhood, hardships (but never tragedies), artistic achievements and triumphs. With Mozart the story terminates before the tragedies begin. The title indicates the theme—*Mozart, the Wonder Boy*.

Knowing the tragedies in the lives of many of these musicians, the biting poverty and the humiliations, you may wonder if the tone of these books is not a shade too merry and light-hearted. The description of the Bachs copying music for their choir at night after a day's work does not suggest enslavement to the task but just another happy evening. There is no hint in the *Mozart* or the *Schubert* of the neglect, the pitiable poverty, and the tragedies that continually haunted these two men. Perhaps this treatment is legitimate since the books are directed to an audience under eleven. Some teachers and parents, on the other hand, feel that young children should not be protected from all harsh realities, that they should know of the ultimate tragedy in Mozart's life, of Beethoven's deafness, of Schubert's poverty. Then, knowing the deprivations of their lives, children may listen with even greater appreciation to the music of these great men.

The fact remains, however, that for young children the Wheeler-Deucher formula is extremely popular. Certainly, children love the episodes these authors have chosen for them—the little Mozart enchanting the Austrian court and announcing that he will marry Marie Antoinette when he grows up, or Bach copying by moonlight the music locked away from him, or Haydn's "Surprise Symphony," which made all the comfortably napping old dowagers jump. These and dozens of other little episodes recorded in the biographies make the lives of the musicians memorable and delightful to young children.

The books have similar format and narrative treatment and they all include black-and-white illustrations and excerpts from the music. They are popular introductions not



From Ingri and Edgar Parin d'Aulaire's *Abraham Lincoln*, Doubleday, Doran, 1940 (original in color, book 7¼ x 11¼)

*Composed with mathematical balance, this picture leads the eye from the center of interest—the new baby—back and up to the fireplace and the clock. Patches of light and dark are evenly distributed on each side. Homely details of frontier life are evident, and the old horse looking in at the baby is a humorous touch.*

*Lincoln.* No need to talk about the doorless dwellings—in one picture a horse has stuck his head into the single room of the cabin and seems to be taking a neighborly interest in the new baby. Notice the little boys' single galluses upon which hangs all the responsibility for holding up their scanty pants. Look at that three-sided shelter of the Lincolns, so hard to describe, but so completely re-created with all its pitiable details. You see for yourself the dangers of sand bars and fallen trees in the river. Abe's tallness is amusingly revealed over and over without the necessity for verbal descriptions. No need to say that Mary Todd was something of a termagant, nor that she had a few problems to contend with in Abe. That picture of the wildly disordered parlor, with Abe on the floor in stocking feet, and with Mary, arms akimbo, reflected in the elegant mirror, is a demonstration of their fundamental unlikeness. The book is full of just the sort of sly humor that characterized Abe himself.

In the early books of this series, the texts were simple and the life stories were incomplete. But with *Benjamin Franklin*, *Buffalo Bill*, and *Columbus*, the content has grown richer, with more details. In the case of *Columbus*, the man's whole life is related, even those tragic last voyages. While these books may be read to third-grade children, older boys and girls will respect their content and enjoy reading the stories for themselves. It is to be hoped that this talented husband-and-wife team will continue these biographies, which have sound texts as well as eye-appeal.

full-page lithographs in deep, glowing colors, on alternate pages, and with black and whites and innumerable small pictures in between. These small pictures fulfill a definite purpose in each book, sometimes adding droll touches to the interpretation of the hero's character, sometimes showing something of his work or progress. In *Benjamin Franklin*, for instance, the decorative borders throughout the book carry a series of Franklin's wise sayings. These are fun for children to discover and read, and they make *Poor Richard's Almanac* more real. Throughout the series, the illustrations are somewhat stylized and occasionally stiff. But this is a minor criticism of pictures alive with action and full of humor. *Leif the Lucky* is the most colorful, *Columbus* the most dramatic, and *Abraham Lincoln* the most droll and revealing. Study the details of the pictures in

Illustration by Wesley Dennis for *Benjamin West and His Cat Grimalkin* by Marguerite Henry, Bobbs-Merrill, 1947 (book 6½ x 9½, picture 4¼ x 3¼)

*Wesley Dennis draws boys as understandingly as he draws horses. And here you see he has given lively Benjamin a convincing cat.*



When, in 1932, Augusta Stevenson wrote the first little book in the series, *Abe Lincoln: Frontier Boy*, probably neither she nor her publishers knew what she was starting. From the beginning her books were enormously popular with children and teachers, and they still are—all twenty or more. Indeed, one state lists the series as "High Interest—Low Vocabulary Books." And that is what they are. Her formula, which all the other authors have followed, is worth examining. In easy-to-read vocabulary, with plenty of conversation, she tells an enthralling story that makes her hero or heroine as real to the children as their schoolmates. The heroes talk, plan their lives, perform deeds that point definitely to the great men they are about to become, and reveal their thoughts and feelings. These are not biographies, but young readers are delighted with the stories. Certainly these books have started many a reluctant reader on his way, and this is no mean achievement. The value of this series to the schools is incalculable. Good readers like them, poor readers try them, and retarded readers in upper grades and even high schools find content they respect.

Yet this series has definite limitations which adults who guide children's reading should be aware of. The pattern is too rigid and the atmosphere too completely merry and gay. Too many of the stories are fairy tales of success. Mistakes are few and success is easy. The young heroes hew to the line too continuously to be real.

This is close to the old stereotyped biog-

raphy of the Parson Weems variety—George Washington the ever truthful. Children are not like that. They are bundles of contradictions that somehow or other fall into the design of maturity only after years of struggle. This oversimplification of life sweeps the young reader along, even if it is "not necessarily so." Once the children start reading this series, they are likely to read too many of the books. Then the good or superior reader may be retarded far below his capacities.

Wisely used, these books may play an important rôle in the development of reading enjoyment. Use them with the young readers to introduce them to a new book interest—the lives of famous men. Use them with retarded readers at the upper grade levels to encourage and keep them reading. Use them also occasionally with older children who are good readers to increase their reading speed or to spur their interest. But don't let your good and superior readers take too many of them. Direct those able readers to books that are genuine biographies, with rich details and full accounts of their heroes—their confusions and mistakes as well as their persistence and success. For that is life.

### The series multiply

The Bobbs-Merrill "Childhood" books seem to have launched the biography fever with

both children and publishers. As a result, not only is the numerical impact of these books

only to musicians but also to biography. In addition to Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Bach, Beethoven, and Grieg, the books include two American composers—Edward MacDowell and Stephen Foster. In every case the authors have chosen musicians whose music is enjoyed by young children.

**Marguerite Henry  
Benjamin West  
and His Cat Grimalkin**

One of the most enchanting story biographies for young children is Mrs. Henry's *Benjamin West and His Cat Grimalkin*. She introduces America's first artist as a child in the midst of the affectionate Quaker family that ran Door-Latch Inn. Grimalkin, the cat, was beloved by every member of the family, and he in turn loved them all. But young Benjamin was his favorite. Everyone said the cat and boy talked to each other, Grimalkin meowing louder and louder until he was sure Benjamin understood. Then the boy began to draw, which was a problem in a Quaker

family. Father feared it was a worldly sin, but he capitulated to the charm of his son's pictures.

Indians helped Benjamin to his colors, and Benjamin, alas! helped himself to Grimalkin's fur for his brushes. Not knowing the cause of the poor cat's mangy appearance, father prayed over Grimalkin, and the whole Quaker community prayed over what to do with Benjamin and his passion for painting. The results were wonderful for cat and boy. Grimalkin got his fur back and America got her first artist. No briefing of this book can even suggest its humor and tender understanding, both of the cat and of all the people involved in Benjamin's problems.

**The Childhood  
of Famous Americans**

There are comparatively few good biographies for young readers, and so perhaps this is the place to consider the series of some one hundred books known as *The Childhood of Famous Americans*. These books are listed for seven years old and up. Libraries classify them not as biography, but as fiction or literature or easy reading or remedial reading, or group some of the books with social studies or science or language arts. The titles indicate the themes to which the life stories are fitted—*John Quincy Adams: Boy Patriot* or *Pocahontas: Brave Girl* or *Ben Franklin: Printer's Boy*. The authors are numerous and include such able writers as Augusta Stevenson, Marguerite Henry, William Steele, Ann Weil, Helen Albee Monsell, and Miriam Mason.

to be a whole village of people outside his house. Indeed there was almost a whole village for all the Bachs had gathered at the home of Ambrosius for their yearly feast of music. It was a great occasion and the day started with everyone joining in a beautiful old song, or chorale as it was called.

There could never be the steady gathering without singing quadrilles, which were two different songs sung at the same time. Then the Bachs did enjoy the one about a quail blowing over a bush as they went to the sea, and a fat cow that would not go to pasture.



Illustration by Mary Greenwalt for Bach by Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher, Dutton, 1937 (book 7 x 8½)

Mary Greenwalt illustrated some of the books about the musicians with silhouettes, which are not particularly popular with children. But these strong sketches in black and white have action, humor, and good characterization. Children enjoy them.

Illustration by Wesley Dennis for Benjamin West  
and His Cat Grimalkin by Marguerite Henry,  
Bobbs Merrill, 1947 (book 6½ x 9½,  
picture 4¼ x 3¼)

*Wesley Dennis draws boys as understandingly  
as he draws horses. And here you see he  
has given lively Benjamin a convincing cat.*



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Wisely used, these books may play an important rôle in the development of reading enjoyment. Use them with the young readers to introduce them to a new book interest—the lives of famous men. Use them with retarded readers at the upper grade levels to encourage and keep them reading. Use them also occasionally with older children who are good readers to increase their reading speed or to spur their interest. But don't let your good and superior readers take too many of them. Direct those able readers to books that are genuine biographies, with rich details and full accounts of their heroes—their confusions and mistakes as well as their persistence and success. For that is life.

### The series multiply

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both children and publishers. As a result, not only is the numerical impact of these books

staggering, but the duplication of heroes has reached the point where it is a major feat of memory to recall which George Washington is whose and whose Abraham Lincoln is which.

It would be convenient to be able to make a judgment of each series as a whole. But this is impossible, because within one set of books some are thin or pedestrian while others are of major importance. Although it is difficult to select from a list, it is wasteful for schools or homes or libraries to order every one of any series. It is best to watch for authoritative reviews of individual books. Many of the books discussed in this chapter are from one or another of the series. However, since each series is designed to perform a definite function in the child's reading program, several of them are considered below.

### Initial Biographies

Scribner is issuing a series of Initial Biographies by Genevieve Foster, author of the admirable *George Washington's World*, *Abraham Lincoln's World*, and *Augustus Caesar's World*. Brief as the *George Washington* or *Theodore Roosevelt* biography is, it covers the man's whole life and provides children from ten to teen-age with a summary of the man's childhood, youthful struggles, and mature contributions. Because these books are brief, they add little that is new to our knowledge of their heroes, and they lack the rich tapestry of details that makes history live for children. *Andrew Jackson* and *Theodore Roosevelt* provide the liveliest reading. Like all of Genevieve Foster's books, the Initial Biographies combine excellent literary style with charming illustrations by the author.

### Signature Books

Grosset and Dunlap call their Signature Books "life stories," which is correct. They are biographical fiction for children eight to twelve years old, with a strong appeal for slow readers at high school level. The publishers insist that close attention is paid to the historical

accuracy of the books, but to compare Iris Vinton's *The Story of John Paul Jones* with Armstrong Sperry's life of Jones is to wonder if you are reading about the same man. That is the trouble with biographical fiction. How can anyone except historians tell where truth ends and fiction begins?

These stories are told with the maximum conversation and action. Most of them cover all or a large part of the man's life, but some end on a triumphant note in early maturity, when there is still tragedy ahead. The books of Hazel Wilson, Margaret Leighton, Iris Vinton, Nina Brown Baker, and Enid Meadowcroft (the editor of the series) are particularly good, and all are written in a lively, fast-moving style children enjoy.

### Landmark Books

In 1950, Random House launched the now famous Landmark Books. The name of the series indicates its approach to history. The books present the men, movements, or moments in history which have been turning points or landmarks in our national life. A series of World Landmark Books is now appearing as well. Sometimes the events are more important than the men, and sometimes it is a man who makes history. The titles show this varied emphasis—for example, *The Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, *The Louisiana Purchase*, *Daniel Boone*, *Robert E. Lee and the Road of Honor*, and *The F.B.I.* Obviously, some of these are biographies and some are not. Such notable writers as Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Quentin Reynolds, John Mason Brown, Samuel Hopkins Adams, Frank Dobie, Bob Considine, Stewart Holbrook, and MacKinlay Kantor have given these books a literary quality not to be found in any other series.

The publishers mark the books R for reading level by grades and I for interest level, also by grades. Many teachers feel that the publishers are a little too optimistic about children's reading ability. Certainly there are only a few of these books that can be read by a nine-year-old. There are many for the



Illustration by Robert Frankenberg for *Abraham Lincoln, Friend of the People* by Clara Ingram Judson, Wilcox and Follett, 1950 (book 7 x 9½, picture 5¼ x 3)

*Abe Lincoln wins his match against Jack Armstrong, one of the Clary Grove boys. Line drawings such as this and Kodachromes of the Lincoln dioramas are a pleasant accompaniment to the text.*

twelves and more for the junior and even senior high school boys and girls. On the whole, they are most enjoyed by the good and superior readers of the upper elementary grades. But these books, more than any other series or single books, have made historical narratives and biographies enormously popular with children. And the fact that more and more outstanding authors of adult books have turned to writing for this series is evidence of their quality.

#### Clara Ingram Judson

There is another historical series, written by a single author and done with such meticulous research that the books deserve special mention. They are the biographies of presidents of the United States by Clara Ingram Judson. In uniform format, with handsome illustrations, these books are a fine addition to school libraries or to a child's personal library.

Mrs. Judson began writing biography in 1939 with a modest little book about Frances Willard called *Pioneer Girl*. That was followed by *Boat Builder; the Story of Robert Fulton* (1940) and others. In 1950, when her *Abraham Lincoln, Friend of the People* appeared, it was evident that this writer, com-

petent in so many fields, had attained new stature as a biographer. It was also evident that Mrs. Judson's research into source materials was to yield a fresh slant on the man. Her careful studies convinced her, for example, that Abe's childhood was no more "poverty stricken" than that of most of the neighbors. She also brought out the warm family love and loyalty of the Lincoln tribe, and Abe himself emerges as a real person.

Mrs. Judson believes that the only justification for new biographies of such well-known national figures as George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, and Theodore Roosevelt is that they throw fresh light on, and give children new facts or a new point of view about, the man. Before she writes a biography, she reads the letters, journals, or papers of her hero, searches contemporary magazines and newspapers, and studies the life of the times. As a result, she has rescued Washington from the stereotypes that had well nigh obliterated him. She even makes Jefferson, the man of ideas, intelligible to children. Mrs. Judson's writing is sometimes stilted, but somehow her deep love of family, her respect for all kinds of people, and her sense of the struggles through which

these men came to greatness communicate themselves to children. They like her books, and they know a man when they finish one of her biographies.

Although new biography series are still

## Biographies for older children: exploration and settlement

The tens to twelves still demand action, but the teen-age group moves toward the men of ideals and ideas as well as of deeds. For children from ten years on, there are excellent biographies and a variety of heroes. In fact there are so many books for this age group that the long bibliography listed on pages 655-660 is still inadequate. The following discussion can only suggest certain groupings and certain ways of using biography which may help in guiding the reading of both individual children and classes of children studying a particular area in time (as periods in United States history) or fields of endeavor (as music or literature).

Ronald Syme

Columbus, Finder of the New World

Ronald Syme is another single author responsible for a series. His biographies of the explorers began as an easy-to-read series for the middle and upper grades—Columbus, Cortés, Champlain, Balboa, Magellan, and others. They now include the more detailed biographies of La Salle, John Smith, and Henry Hudson, which command the interest of the twelves to fourteens whether they are good or poor readers. All of the stories are augmented by the dramatic and virile illustrations of William Stobbs.

Mr. Syme's *Columbus, Finder of the New World* is typical of the style and approach of all of the books. Christopher Columbus is a difficult character to present to children. The drama of his life rises grandly to the successful conclusion of the first voyage. After that, failure and tragedy stalk his path. He diminishes in heroic stature to a sorrowful ignominy, which is hard for children to accept

springing up, these examples will suffice to show types, ranges, and limitations. The fact remains that some of the finest biographies for children and youth are still to be found outside any series.

because it violates their sense of justice. It is greatly to Mr. Syme's credit that he presents the gloom as well as the glory. In this brief, well-written biography, the Admiral of the Ocean Sea goes down to his death nobly—defeated, but still the hero of adventures more exciting than any fiction.

So Mr. Syme's books, more than most other biographies for children, reveal pictures of the dark as well as the bright side of the hero's character or experiences. They are authentic biographies, written with a directness children like, and his heroes are never stereotyped.

Along with Mr. Syme's *Columbus*, some children in a class should read Armstrong Sperry's fine *Voyages of Christopher Columbus* (Landmark) and then, for another slant on the Admiral, Nina Brown Baker's *Amerigo Vespucci*. This is a biography of the man for whom our continent was named, a modest, scholarly scientist, more interested in stars, navigation, and maps than in position or money. But why was the continent named for him and not for Columbus? Mrs. Baker explains the relationship between the two explorers and their voyages, and the picture she gives of Columbus helps to explain the nature of his downfall. Like all the biographies by this author, the book is good reading, written in easy style with the dialogue characteristic of fictionalized biography.

Esther Averill

Cartier Sails the St. Lawrence

Here is a book of rare distinction both in text and illustrations. First published in 1937, the new edition of this book includes a few additional pictures by Feodor Rojankovsky.



The author said she "leaned heavily upon [the illustrations] for dramatic interest." (*The Horn Book*, August 1956, p. 265) And they are indeed among the finest Mr. Rojankovsky has made, for they illustrate in the true sense of the word. That is, they pick up the essence of the text and make it brilliantly visible to the reader. Such pictures are both an interpretation and an amplification of the text, which is the true function of pictures in a book. And *Cartier Sails the St. Lawrence*

needed such pictures because it is not fictionalized.

Miss Averill's factual account of the three voyages makes fascinating reading, even so. After all, when a man sets off to discover the Northwest Passage to China and finds himself sailing up a river as magnificent and extensive as the St. Lawrence, the adventure could hardly be called dull. The book is less biography than history, but still belongs to the children's gallery of explorers.

## Colonial and Revolutionary periods

The colonial and Revolutionary periods in the United States are so crowded with great men that it is impossible to use biographies of all of them. This chapter can give only samplings which the bibliography will amplify.

**Elizabeth Janet Gray**  
Penn

Penn's day in the New World ended before the Revolution began, but many of his ideas lived after him. Elizabeth Janet Gray (Mrs. Vining), herself a Quaker, has written a magnificent biography of William Penn. It brings life and color to this generally nebulous national figure. So many references to detailed episodes in this book have already been made (pp. 512-513, 516, 517) that it is mentioned here only as a reminder of its distinction and values. It is a full-length portrait of the man who brought to America ideas of religious and racial tolerance and judicial standards, and who lived in such concord with his Indian neighbors that when there were massacres in Pennsylvania, no Quaker was ever harmed. So rich and vivid are the details of this narrative that William Penn lives for young readers as a very real and human man.

**Jeanette Eaton**  
*Leader by Destiny*  
Young Lafayette

Washington is undoubtedly one of the most

difficult figures to bring alive for children, both because he has been belittled by the trivial anecdotes told about him, and because he has the subtle, intangible qualities of a highly civilized human being. Self-discipline and restraint are not easy for children to understand or to appreciate, and for this reason in particular Washington is a better character for adolescence than for children.

The best juvenile biography of him, Jeanette Eaton's *Leader by Destiny*, is for the teen age, but it is such an extraordinary book that adults could also profit by reading it. You catch in it, for instance, Washington's lifelong regret for his inadequate education, dating back, perhaps, to that humiliating treaty with the French, when he signed a shameful and erroneous admission because he could not read French and his staff interpreter was little better. This incident made Washington the laughingstock of the young blades of Williamsburg. A lesser man might never have recovered from the humiliation, but Washington did. You find in this book Washington's single indiscretion in his relations to his friend's wife, the beautiful Sally Fairfax. He wrote her one letter declaring his love. This letter Sally kept secret until the day of her death, and it remained secret for a hundred years after. In this book you see Washington's affectionate relations with his wife's children, and you see Martha herself as a charming and devoted helpmate to Washington, who came to appreciate her more and

more. This book will help young people and adults know Washington as a very human, often bewildered man with a strange gift for inspiring confidence in other men.

For less able or less mature readers, Jeanette Eaton has written *Washington, the Nation's First Hero*. Her two biographies of Washington may be supplemented by those by Clara Judson and Genevieve Foster. Girls will enjoy the charmingly written *Martha, Daughter of Virginia* by Marguerite Vance. And from these books some children will turn to biographies of Lafayette. Jeanette Eaton has written one of the finest, *Young Lafayette*, in the mature style of *Leader by Destiny*.

*Young Lafayette* gives a picture of the young French idealist, and again throws an interesting light on Washington. In Lafayette's almost awed reverence for his hero, we see the strange power of Washington over the men who surrounded him. He never lost his stature as a hero to them in spite of his very human weaknesses. This biography of Lafayette, which carries him through the French Revolution, is both authentic and finely written, as are all the biographies by Jeanette Eaton.

#### Hazel Wilson

The Story of Lafayette

The Story of Mad Anthony Wayne

In spite of the fact that both of these Signature biographies read as conversationally as stories, Mrs. Wilson is too conscientious a research student not to base her episodes on documented facts. This book, for younger readers than Jeanette Eaton's *Lafayette*, manages to give children a full-length portrait of a man whose life is more romantic than any novel. Hazel Wilson shows glimpses of his happy childhood, his introduction to court life which, far from turning his head, confirmed his idealism and love of liberty. His marriage at sixteen was a happy one—only from recent research have we learned how happy.

Lafayette's coming to the aid of our strug-

gling colonies was inevitable, but the wonder lies in his immediate recognition of Washington's greatness. This helped him to forget the Congress which received him so miserably, half starved and half paid his men, and gave Washington himself inadequate and delayed support. The author not only holds children's interest through this familiar story, but also through the French Revolution and Lafayette's long imprisonment. Mrs. Wilson finishes her full-length portrait of the man with Lafayette, full of years and honors, making a triumphal tour of this country and receiving a tardy but generous recognition of his services from another Congress. A coincidence which will delight children is the fact that the first man on our shores to receive Lafayette cordially into his home had a little boy who, when he had grown up, attempted a gallant rescue of Lafayette from the French prison. The attempt failed, but Lafayette's heart must have warmed when he knew his would-be rescuer's identity. Here is wonderful material for a play!

So in Mrs. Wilson's biography of Mad Anthony Wayne lively details and the full cycle of his life make this appealing Revolutionary hero real to children. There are delightful flashes of humor in these stories, but the bite of tragedy is not always so convincing. These are nevertheless good introductory accounts of both men.

#### Iris Vinton

The Story of John Paul Jones

Armstrong Sperry

John Paul Jones: Fighting Sailor

Another Revolutionary hero children should not miss is John Paul Jones. Iris Vinton's account of his life (Signature) is simple enough for ten-year-olds, ending as it does with the early naval victory. But Armstrong Sperry (Landmark) gives the man's whole life, and only older children can endure the tragedy. Jones' incredible naval victories were invariably followed by rank ingratitude and injustice. And it was not until after he died, lonely and obscure, that his naval genius was

recognized. Now his grave is a national shrine, at Annapolis. The magnificent theme of this book—"But if all should go wrong, have ye the character to stand fast and see it through?" lifts the tragedy of this remarkable Scot into glory.

### **Howard Fast**

*Haym Solomon: Son of Liberty*

A less known figure is Haym Solomon, the intensely patriotic Jew who helped finance the Revolution. Howard Fast's biography of the man is for superior readers of thirteen or fourteen and is well worth their while. This frail man, Haym Solomon, escaped from a British prison. Penniless and pursued, he managed to reestablish himself and make a fortune which he devoted to the colonial cause. He knew he had not long to live and would probably never receive the credit due him, but until the day of his death he continued his selfless efforts for the liberty in which he believed so passionately. This is a curious and moving life which deserves to be better known by both adults and children than it is.

### **James Daugherty**

*Poor Richard*

For superior readers with mature interests, James Daugherty's *Poor Richard* has unusual distinction. This book covers Franklin's whole life, his manifold activities, and his amazing talent for friendship among people of all varieties and ages. The chapter called "An American in Paris" opens in this way:

*One man alone captured a city. An American had taken Paris single-handed.*

*All the king's horses and all the king's men could not do what the friendly seventy-year-old journeyman printer was doing in spite of himself. He was surprised and pleased to find himself a hero. He was ready to act the part, knowing all that it might mean for America*

The chapter includes a visit with John Paul Jones, "a one-man navy," and a little later we are treated to the scandalized Abigail Adams'

report of a dinner where Mme. Helvétius sat with one arm around Franklin's shoulder and the other on the chair of Abigail's own John. "After dinner," wrote the outraged Mrs. Adams, "she threw herself on a settee where she showed more than her feet." Here, obviously, is a somewhat mature interpretation of the times, written and illustrated with Daugherty's usual gusto and swing. For children who can enjoy it, it is a fine book to read and to own, but for the most part, it belongs to the teen-age group.

### **Gene Lisitzky**

*Thomas Jefferson*

Gene Lisitzky's account of *Thomas Jefferson* is as satisfactory a biography as any single volume that has been written about the man. Jefferson is almost as complicated and diverse a human being as Franklin, and he is far more difficult to bring to life for children. For Jefferson was an intellectual, and he dealt continually with abstract ideas as easily as his neighbors dealt with their crops. It is difficult to make such a man live for children and young people. Even for adults, the biographers have tended to simplify their task by giving only one special slant on the man—his youth, or his statecraft, or his life in Virginia.

Gene Lisitzky, in one book, has given us glimpses of many phases of the whole man, from boyhood through his active and complex maturity. We see Jefferson never too concerned with world affairs to enjoy a ride on a fine horse or an hour with his violin; never too busy to write long letters to his motherless little girls and to await anxiously their all too brief replies (the actual letters are given); never too important to remember his native state and to send from Europe flowers, vegetables, trees, and shrubs to be cultivated in Virginia's rich soil. Gene Lisitzky shows all the aspects of this man, who was the founder of a university and one of the builders of a new nation. Here is a great biography for any child who can read it, a biography worth owning. If the twelves cannot take it all, and they probably can't be-

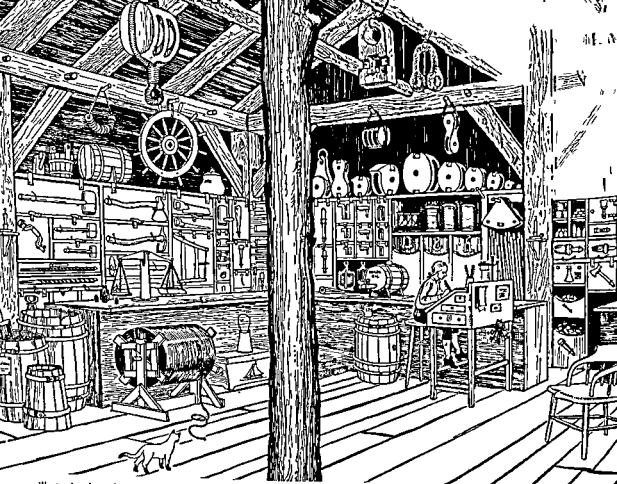


Illustration by John O'Hara Cosgrave II for *Carry On, Mr. Bowditch* by Jean Lee Latham, Houghton Mifflin, 1955 (book 5½ x 8½)

*The solitary figure of Nathaniel Bowditch looks tiny in this vast ship chandlery with all its sailing necessities drawn in realistic detail.*

cause it is a big canvas, then give them references to parts of it.

For less mature children and less able readers, there is the Jefferson biography by Clara Judson, and remember that Marguerite Vance has the delightful *Patsy Jefferson of Monticello* for the girls.

### Parallel biographies

Considering only three of these mighty molders of a nation—Franklin, Jefferson, and Washington—it is evident that biographies are available for children of any reading or maturity level. And so prodigal of greatness was the colonial period and so diligent are our biographers that for quite a range of other heroes a choice of books is available. There is a fine biography of Paul Revere by

Esther Forbes and another by Dorothy Canfield Fisher (*Landmark*). There is a book about Ethan Allen by Stewart Holbrook and another by Slater Brown (*Landmark*). And, of course, there are the Vinton and Sperry books about John Paul Jones.

Some teachers are convinced that for less intellectual children the best approach to history is through a series of biographies of the men of a period. If you try such an experiment for the colonial period, certainly you will wish to read for yourself Esther Forbes' *Paul Revere and the World He Lived In*, Carl Van Doren's *Benjamin Franklin*, Rupert Hughes' *George Washington*, Catherine Drinker Bowen's *John Adams and the American Revolution*, and one of the adult Jefferson biographies, perhaps *Jefferson: The Road to Glory* by Marie

Kimball. With a background of any of these books you could give rich details and deeper meaning to the children's necessarily simplified pictures of these men and their times.

**Jean Lee Latham**

**Carry On, Mr. Bowditch**

Between the great leaders in the American Revolution and the sturdy frontiersmen of the push westward is the unique figure of Nathaniel Bowditch. Born in Salem, Massachusetts, in 1773, he never had a day's schooling after he was ten years old. Yet he became an outstanding astronomer, mathematician, and author of *The New American Practical Navigator*, published in 1802 and still considered the bible of modern navigation.

When Nathaniel was twelve, his father bound him out for nine years to a ship's

## Westward Ho!

One of the most important moves in Jefferson's presidency was the launching of the Lewis and Clark expedition to explore the West. Jefferson's vision of the significance of the Louisiana Purchase and the opening of the West, like his vision of abolishing slavery, was ahead of his day. Meriwether Lewis had been Jefferson's private secretary when the President called upon him to head this important exploration. Lewis immediately chose his boyhood friend, Lieutenant William Clark, to accompany him and divide the command.

**Julia Davis**

**No Other White Men**

Julia Davis in her *No Other White Men* has given children an unforgettable account, not merely of the exploration but of an enduring friendship between two fine men. The narrative tells little of their youth and ends with the successful completion of their journey to the Pacific and back, but the portraits of these two men for the period of their two-year adventure together (1804-1806) are unexcelled. We see Lewis, the dignified gentleman with his curled hair, who kept lengthy reports

of the journey in his delicate handwriting; and we see Clark, big, bluff, hearty, red-headed, and practical, keeping a diary, too, with spelling "as free and joyous as his nature." Both men were completely loyal to their cause and to each other, and no trace of jealousy or competition for fame ever sullied their relationship. Miss Davis uses both journals as sources, and frequently quotes Clark for the pleasure of his original spelling. Needless to say, it delights the children. "A butiful promising child," he writes of the Bird Woman's baby.

There are many funny episodes in this narrative; the action is often exciting, with considerable suspense; the discipline of the men is impressive in its prompt severity; and Sacajawea's meeting with her Shoshone brother is as dramatic as any scene in fiction. This book has been a continuous favorite with eleven- and twelve-year-old children ever since it appeared.

**James Daugherty**

**Of Courage Undaunted**

This book also makes good use of the explorers' journals. There is a stirring quality

about this narrative that highlights the dangers and drama of the expedition and makes a strong appeal to young readers. James Daugherty makes not only Lewis and Clark but other members of the group distinct personalities. His powerful illustrations, as always, give a feeling of vigorous action which enhances the text.

**Frances Joyce Farnsworth**  
Winged Moccasins:  
the Story of Sacajawea

Another biography that should be used with those of Lewis and Clark is the life of Sacajawea.

## Old Hickory and his colleagues

The Jacksonian period bristles with great names and is a source of several good juvenile biographies. Old Hickory himself and all of his colleagues are cut after the child's own pattern of a hero—fighters, explorers, woodsmen, quick straight shots, men of action every one! The group begins with Daniel Boone and includes, besides Jackson, such colorful figures as Crazy Horse, Davy Crockett, and Sam Houston.

It is a pity that *Young Hickory* by Stanley Young was allowed to go out of print. (See p. 574.) But Genevieve Foster's *Initial Biography* makes a good introduction to Andrew Jackson, and Clara Judson's *Andrew Jackson, Frontier Statesman* is a notable contribution which children like and should not miss. Most of the children's books about Andrew Jackson have played down the scandal which dogged his life, and yet the cruel injustice of that scandal points up the man's deep feelings and loyalty. For that reason the biography by Mrs. Vance is important.

**Marguerite Vance**  
The Jacksons of Tennessee

Despite the title, this book is somewhat more the story of Rachel Jackson than it is of her husband, Andrew Jackson. Beautiful and kindly Rachel Donelson had made a tragic first marriage. In the days when news traveled

slowly, she had every reason to believe her divorce was complete when she married Jackson. Mrs. Vance presents the details of this tragic misunderstanding (for such it was) which almost wrecked Jackson's career. The gentle beauty of Rachel, their all too brief moments of fun and triumph, their love of the children they gathered around them—nothing could ameliorate the shadow of that bitter story. In the end it killed Rachel. This is a mature and complex social problem, compassionately handled. It brings out what youth should know—the often disastrous effect of malicious gossip—and it tells a moving story of two high-spirited and devoted people.

**James Daugherty**  
Daniel Boone

James Daugherty's superb *Daniel Boone* (p. 514) is one of the finest bits of Americana we have for children. The old woodsman was a contemporary of Jackson; Audubon knew him, and so perhaps did Davy Crockett; and it was over his "Wilderness Road" through the Cumberland gap that Lucy Hanks carried her baby, Nancy. So Daniel Boone seems to be a link which pulls together different men and periods.

For a fuller biography of the man at a more mature level, some children should read

John Mason Brown's *Daniel Boone* (Landmark).

**Shannon Garst**  
**Crazy Horse**

Toward the end of this period of westward expansion came the terrible struggles between the advancing hordes of white men and the Indians. Several fine biographies of Indian leaders of this period will give children both sides of the picture. *Crazy Horse* is one of the best of these. It begins with his training as a boy, shows his bitter experiences with the bad faith and cruelties of the white men and his growing determination to stop their invasion at all costs. The end is sheer tragedy. Crazy Horse is defeated and his people scattered or herded into a reservation, and Crazy Horse, rather than submit, fights to his death. No child who reads this moving record will ever believe the cruelties were all on one side.

**Constance Rourke**  
**Davy Crockett**

Constance Rourke has never written a better biography than her *Davy Crockett*. In spite of the confused legends about him, she has done her best to hold to the facts, and has used his own famous "Narrative," original spelling and all, as one of her chief sources. Children will be amused to discover that the eight-year-old Davy was given a gun and taught to shoot and that if he missed his game he got no supper. Davy was "bound out" several times, once to a drover who practically enslaved him, and once to a kindly Quaker who made him go to school for one winter (his only schooling). The Quaker is supposed to have said, "Thee's bound to be a rolling stone, I fear, for all that thee can bend thy back and work hard."

Davy married and set up as a farmer at eighteen, but farming was not for him. Tales of his skill as a hunter were soon circulating. He served under Jackson in the War of 1812, and at that time seems to have admired Jackson greatly. After the war was over he was

elected magistrate, although he could barely write his name. He served in the legislature and was elected congressman; during this service as "the coon-skin congressman," he broke with Jackson over Jackson's treatment of the Indians. But another young man who had also fought under Old Hickory stood by and helped the President in the matter of dislodging the Cherokees and four other tribes from their lands given them by treaty. That man was Sam Houston, and Davy never trusted either Jackson or Houston again. Years later old Davy, disappointed in politics, went out to Texas just in time to catch up with the fighting. He placed himself under Travis' command rather than serve under Sam Houston, and there he perished gallantly during the siege of the Alamo. Davy always was loyal to his friends, the Indians. "Happy hunting, neighbors," he used to call to them, and so they might have called to their friend, "Happy hunting, Davy, wherever you are." The twelve- to fourteen-year-olds find in this well-written story of Davy Crockett a hero after their own hearts.

The Landmark series can supply books about numerous other colorful figures of this period. But for a swashbuckling hero none can compare with Sam Houston, and so far there is no book about him comparable to Marquis and Bessie James' *Six Feet Six*.

**Marquis and Bessie James**  
**Six Feet Six**

One of the prize biographies of the group is *Six Feet Six: The Heroic Story of Sam Houston* by Marquis and Bessie James. This is the book Bessie James cut and adapted for children from her husband's authoritative adult biography, *The Raven*, which won the Pulitzer Prize.

In *Six Feet Six*, we see Sam, the handsome, dark boy who hated farming and who ran away to live with the Indians. Sam was adopted by Oo-loo-te-ka, the Cherokee chief. Throughout his life we see how Sam, when things got too much for him, would invariably go back to his Indian friend and his

foster father, Oo-loo-te-ka. In the war with the Indians, Houston attracted the attention of Jackson. After the War of 1812, Jackson sent Sam to try to talk the Cherokees and the other tribes into a new treaty, one which would force them to give up their lands in Tennessee and move west of the Mississippi.

Houston persuaded the Indians that they would be better off in the West—perhaps he believed it—and the Cherokees and Osages agreed to go. Later they sent a half-breed playmate of Sam's to tell him that they had been swindled again. They were hungry, harassed, and cheated by agents. The old chief begged for his foster son's aid, but Sam was advancing politically at that time and did nothing about this appeal. Perhaps there was nothing he could do. He was the popular governor of Tennessee with a dozen irons in the fire. He was even being talked of as the next president. But suddenly, for some unsolved reason, he left the wife he had just married, resigned as governor, and fled to his old haven, the lodge of Oo-loo-te-ka.

## Civil War period

The Lincoln period as well as the Washington and the Jackson periods is well represented by many fine juvenile biographies of great men. Children can saturate themselves in these periods by reading several of the biographies. Or a whole group of biographies can be covered in class reports by individual children. Through familiarity with the lives of these men, children often get a vivid and lasting impression of historical eras.

**Carl Sandburg**

*Abe Lincoln Grows Up*

There are almost as many fascinating biographies of Lincoln for children as there are for adults. The outstanding favorite is Carl Sandburg's *Abe Lincoln Grows Up* (p. 516), adapted from his adult *The Prairie Years*. The fourteens and the superior readers among the twelves can read this for themselves, but even the poorest readers in the upper grades

Then Houston seems to have done all he could to help his Indian friends, and he managed to rid them of the thieving government agents who had been harassing them. In Washington again, the protégé of President Jackson, Sam continued to help the Indians. This is one of his most picturesque periods. Having spanked a senator, he pleaded his own case before the House of Representatives so wittily that he became a national hero. He finally left Washington to organize the war that was to take Texas from Mexico. The last and noblest part of Sam's life in Texas is too well known to need reviewing here. He left the imprint of his colorful personality, his selfless love for the state he had brought into being, and his unswerving devotion to the Union, not only upon Texas but upon our whole country. Sam, grandiloquent, handsome, witty, a fighter from away back, did enough in his life for two heroes, and the children like every inch of his "six feet six." This is a book most twelves to fourteens will read and reread.

should not miss it entirely. Read aloud to them excerpts from this book. They will be encouraged and entertained by the language Abe talked in his childhood (Chapter V). They will enjoy the chapters titled "Pleasant Superstitions" (Chapter XVII) and "'Peculiar-some' Abe" (Chapter XVIII), and these chapters will help them see how long a road Abe had to travel to the literacy of his adult years, the moving beauty of his prose, and the strength of his maturity.

**James Daugherty**

*Abraham Lincoln*

The teen-age child can swing from this Sandburg story of Lincoln's youth, with its lively illustrations by James Daugherty, to Mr. Daugherty's own *Abraham Lincoln*, which covers the whole life. This book is as unhackneyed as Sandburg's. It avoids the usual anecdotes found in most of the other juve-



niles, and with remarkable clarity and power tells the story of Lincoln in relation to the stormy war years. A reviewer summarizing Mr. Daugherty's contribution in his three biographies writes:

... "Daniel Boone," "Poor Richard" and now "Abraham Lincoln"—are linked together in unity of spirit, an appreciation, in the true sense, of the restless, surging, visionary America which, with all its faults, has borne Titans.<sup>1</sup>

There is something in the spirit which animates Mr. Daugherty's pen and brush that seems particularly adapted to the interpretation of titans. His *Abraham Lincoln* illustrations show all the rowdy vigor of his earlier drawings, but predominant in the book is the brooding melancholy of the oddest and perhaps loneliest of our great men. *Abraham Lincoln* is the most serious of Mr. Daugherty's three biographies, as we should expect, and is a magnificently clear if tragic picture of the man who was a match for the most tragic days of our internal strife.

**Clara Ingram Judson**  
Abraham Lincoln,  
Friend of the People

Many think this is the finest book in Mrs. Judson's biography series. Certainly it can take its place with the Sandburg and Daugherty Lincolns. The illustrations are unique also. In addition to the pen-and-ink drawings, there are colored photographs of the Lincoln dioramas from the Chicago Historical Society. These pictures are eye-catching and curiously alive.

**Bernadine Bailey**  
Abe Lincoln's Other Mother

Bernadine Bailey's *Abe Lincoln's Other Mother* is an interesting book about Lincoln's early days. It is fiction founded on facts and concerns the warm, affectionate relationship that existed between Abe and his stepmother,



Illustration by Lynd Ward for America's Robert E. Lee  
by Henry Steele Commager, Houghton Mifflin, 1951  
(book 6¼ x 9½, picture 5 x 5)

Gaunt, ragged figures, these are the symbols of any war. Lynd Ward's pictures have an almost three-dimensional quality, suggesting statues.

Sarah Bush, during the years they were together in Tom Lincoln's household. The story is tenderly told, and those last visits from the boy who had grown into the great man Sarah had somehow expected him to be are less well known than some of the earlier episodes. They are very moving. Girls will like the detailed pictures of the housekeeping of those days and the descriptions of the difficult tasks which the girls were supposed to assume. Sarah Bush herself emerges from this picture a very real woman and a loving mother to all her brood. She is a fine rebuke to the old concept of the stepmother. Children ten to twelve enjoy this historical story.

**Henry Steele Commager**  
America's Robert E. Lee

Here is a significant title, emphasizing as it does the fact that Robert E. Lee is a hero all America is proud of. Northern children should certainly read a good biography of this man, who was held in such high regard, both as a strategist and as a man, by his con-

<sup>1</sup>Ellen Lewis Buell, "The Story of Honest Abe," a review of Mr. Daugherty's *Abraham Lincoln* in *The New York Times Book Review*, December 19, 1943.

temporaries on both sides of the tragic struggle. The authenticity of the text is guaranteed by Mr. Commager's eminence as a historian. Lee's career progressed so smoothly that it is probably difficult to make him as colorful or dramatic a figure as some of our other national heroes. But this biography sketches in briefly the distinguished family background of the Lees, follows Robert through his youth, his remarkable record at West Point, and his marriage. The war years are there, too, climaxing in that epoch-making day at Appomattox. Children will close this quiet biography with a deeper understanding for that sorrowful war, so gallantly maintained by the losing side. Some of the finest pictures Lynd Ward has ever made illustrate this biography. Boys pore over the battle scenes, which have the dramatic quality the text sometimes lacks.

For the story of the Lees' family life, children can read Marguerite Vance's *The Lees of Arlington: the Story of Mary and Robert E. Lee*.

#### **MacKinlay Kantor**

##### **Lee and Grant at Appomattox**

The author of the Pulitzer Prize novel *Andersonville* has written one of the most thrilling books in the whole Landmark series. It is the day-by-day account of the last weeks of the war, climaxing in the surrender. The armies were encamped three miles apart. Both generals knew the end was inevitable, and both

were heartsick over the loss of life. General Lee was so proud of his men that it broke his heart to have to surrender. In flashbacks the author fills in the background of both generals. For Lee there had been a lifetime of aristocratic distinction, an unblemished record of high honors. Grant's shabby past had included a forced resignation from an army commission, then a slow rehabilitation and a remarkable rise to be Commander of the Union Army. Now the two men would face each other.

A boy who had been racing through this intensely dramatic and moving narrative kept challenging his family. At dinner he would burst forth with, "Did you know that on those last days Grant got the most terrible headache, so he couldn't eat or sleep, but when the note of surrender came, he said he was cured in a minute? And did you know that Grant sent food to Lee's men, right off? And what do you think? When the Union troops started celebrating, Grant stopped them. He said, 'The war is over, the Rebels are our fellow countrymen again.' And what's more, he let the Southern men keep their horses, 'cause they had furnished their own horses and now it was time for the spring planting!" And when his family admitted ignorance of these details, the boy said impatiently, "Well, gosh! You'd better read this book and you'll know something about these men!" And he was right.

### **Biographies which meet special interests**

Each important era in United States history had a remarkable group of men, many of whose lives are admirably recorded in biographies suitable for children or young people. As has been suggested, these books may be used in groups to supplement or even, in some cases, to take the place of the usual history textbook. So you can build a group study around notable women or musicians or writers or around almost any field of human endeavor.

#### **Heroines**

Sometimes girls complain that biographies are always about men, but actually there are many fine biographies of women. Jeanette Eaton's magnificent *Jeanne d'Arc, the Warrior Saint* or Albert Bigelow Paine's *Girl in White Armor* or Elizabeth Meigs' *Candle in the Sky* are all about the same girl and are all fine books. Not to have wept over the *Warrior Maid* is to have missed one of the

poignant thrills of youthful reading. And coming to the battles of later days, girls enjoy Margaret Leighton's *The Story of Florence Nightingale*. It is a sympathetic account of her struggles against family opposition and public indifference.

The American counterpart of Florence Nightingale, Clara Barton, belongs to the Lincoln period. A biography of her by Mildred Pace shows the girl who became the great nurse and organizer of the Civil War service to the wounded.

Another Civil War heroine we are more likely to think of as a contemporary is Louisa M. Alcott. She, too, nursed the wounded and tried to clean the unsanitary hospitals of the day, but we tend to forget all this, identifying her with her own creation—Jo in *Little Women*. Cornelia Meigs has given us a remarkable biography of this energetic, gifted woman in her *Invincible Louisa*, Newbery Medal winner for 1934.

There are three good collections of brief biographies of women. E. M. Sickels' *In Calico and Crinoline* takes heroines from colonial through Civil War days. Sonia Daugherty's *Ten Brave Women* gives well-written accounts of women who have made history, from Mary Lyon, the founder of Mount Holyoke College, to Eleanor Roosevelt. And Jane and Burt McConnell give diverting accounts of our *First Ladies*.

Royalty is well represented by Marguerite Vance's *Elizabeth Tudor*, *Sovereign Lady*, Marian King's excellent life of *Young Mary Stuart*, and two fine biographies of Marie Antoinette, one by Mrs. Vance and one by Bernadine Kielty. In these books girls will see authentic pictures of royalty triumphant and royalty tragic.

Clara Judson's *City Neighbor*, *The Story of Jane Addams* brings us to modern women. Adolescent girls are idealists, and this fine record of a dedicated life appeals to them.

Adèle de Leeuw's *The Story of Amelia Earhart* is beautifully told. Girls interested in flying or adventure or the life of a warm, brave-hearted woman will like this book.

For the children interested in ballet, *Dancing Star: The Story of Anna Pavlova* by Gladys Malvern presents not only the story of a great ballerina but a fascinating picture of ballet training. This array of heroines should convince girls that biography records a variety of important women as well as men.

### Negroes

Not until Elizabeth Yates' *Amos Fortune, Free Man* won the Newbery Medal had most of the world heard of this man. Born an African prince, sold in Boston, well treated by a series of masters, Amos learned the tanner's trade and eventually earned his freedom. After that, this humble, mighty soul devoted everything he earned to buying freedom for other slaves. Freedom and education were the greatest things in his life. He died a respected member of the little New Hampshire town of Jaffrey, where he had lived so long. When Miss Yates saw the tombstones of Amos and Violet, she tells us, she knew she must write his biography. It is written with the same warmth and human compassion that mark her stories, *Mountain Born* and *A Place for Peter*. Since most books about slavery deal with the South, it is good to have this picture of slave running and sales in the North. The details are grim enough, but Amos Fortune carried suffering lightly because his eyes were on the freedom of the future.

Ann Petry, the Negro novelist, has told a well-documented story of another famous slave, *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad*. The subtitle indicates the exciting action that fills a good part of the book. But the writer also gives a detailed picture of Harriet's childhood and youth on the plantation, the training and influences that made her what she was. She led three hundred slaves to freedom, and her exploits are a record of courage and uncanny skills that make an incredibly thrilling story.

No American child should come out of our high schools without having read that unexcelled autobiography—Booker T. Washing-

ton's *Up from Slavery*. The title is also its theme. This is the focus of the whole book—the struggle up from slavery. The struggle for education, a smaller pattern of the central idea, is repeated over and over: first an education for himself, then for his brother, then for the Indians, then for more and more of his own people. Here, indeed, was a life with a great theme, a life which attained the symmetry, the wholeness of a work of art. There is also a fine biography of Booker T. Washington by Shirley Graham.

George Washington Carver's contributions to science are little short of miraculous. For adults and mature young people, his life has been well written by Rackham Holt (Mrs. Margaret Van Vechter Holt) in her book *George Washington Carver: An American Biography*. The *Story of George Washington Carver* by Arna Bontemps is a substantial study of the man for the middle grades. A much more mature biography for children twelve to fourteen is *Dr. George Washington Carver, Scientist* by Shirley Graham and George Dewey Lipscomb. This is a dignified and thorough study of this genius.

#### Artists, musicians, and writers

Most biographies of artists, musicians, and writers are for the older teen-age group. But children with strong interests in any one of these special fields will find a few books within their reach.

Elizabeth Ripley, for instance, is writing a splendid series of books about artists. Each is illustrated with black-and-white reproductions of the artist's pictures, showing something of his scope and style. Her texts follow a similar pattern throughout the series. She sketches the childhood and youth of the artist briefly. Then with the beginning of his productivity she tells about his life as it relates to his major works. For instance, she shows Michelangelo as almost the victim of his two gifts—for painting and for sculpture. The former with its vision of endless details seemed to enslave him, while sculpture freed his energies and let his creative spirit soar. He

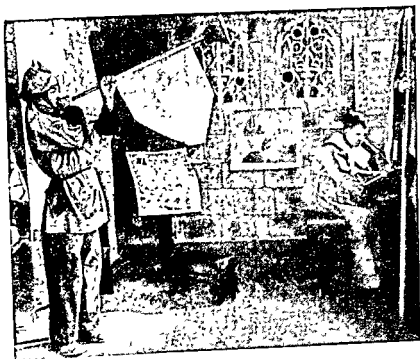
agonized four years painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel; it left him crippled and almost blind. But he carved his David and the superb tombs with ease. Children, young people, and the whole family will enjoy these fine books.

In his *Rainbow Book of Art*, Thomas Craven, the distinguished art critic, has written a lively history of artists and art from cave drawings to modern painting on both sides of the Atlantic. Within this one big volume he has managed to give some exceedingly sharp vignettes of the artists. When, for instance, he tells about Michelangelo's lying flat on the scaffold at work on that endless Sistine ceiling and bitterly denouncing young Raphael's proclivity for copying his betters, he tells something about both men. This is one of the most readable texts on the development of art and artists to be found anywhere. Illustrated with black-and-white and glorious color reproductions, it is a treasure for any school or family to own.

Lives of the musicians beyond the level of the Wheeler and Deucher series are for mature readers. Claire Lee Purdy's *He Heard America Sing: The Story of Stephen Foster* is perhaps the simplest. It is also a well-balanced picture of an overindulged child who was allowed to stay away from school and who, all of his life, continued to run away from difficulties and discipline. Even in his beloved music he never forced himself to master harmony. Yet the man's lovable qualities, his talent, his songs, and his sorrows make him an appealing figure.

Madeleine Goss writes at youth level of such master musicians as Beethoven, Bach, and others. Her sound musicianship and feeling for her subjects make these books worth while for the more mature child with a special interest in the field.

Laura Ben  r's *Enchanting Jenny Lind* will provide girls with another heroine as romantic as any in fiction. This delightful book captures the flavor of the times, the special qualities of the singer, and the excitement of her triumphs all over the world.



*Sixth-grade students present  
an effective dramatization as  
a culmination of their study  
of early manuscripts.*

*Franklin School, History of  
Records Unit.*

Santa Barbara City Schools

Among the biographies of writers, one of the finest for children and young people is *Young Walter Scott* by Elizabeth Janet Gray. It is real biography based on careful research, and carries the novelist from early childhood to his romance. The boy's courage in overcoming his lameness, his gaiety, his fights—despite the lameness—and his early passion for the ballads which were to become a life-long interest make him a boy's hero. The story of his life is superlative reading.

*River Boy*, Isabel Proudfit's life of Mark Twain, will also be liked by twelve-year-old boys. This biography often adds to the enjoyment of Twain's own *Tom Sawyer*.

On the other hand, Lincoln Steffens' *Boy on Horseback*, an adaptation of this newspaperman's adult autobiography, is always extremely popular with boys. Twelves can read it, and the fourteen-year-olds thoroughly enjoy it. As one boy said to his mother, "Now there's a kid *on his own*, but he learned how to take care of himself, and that's what we've all got to do." The mother was a little startled, but upon reading the book herself decided the boy was right.

Boys also delight in *On Safari* (p. 479), Theodore Waldeck's account of his first ad-

venture in the jungle where as a cub explorer he did everything wrong and was thoroughly disciplined. The fact that he not only survived but succeeded as an explorer and as a writer is a great comfort to young readers.

### Adventurers

Waldeck's *On Safari* belongs also in the group of biographies which stress adventure. Commander Byrd's *Alone*, one of the best of this group, has been a favorite with youth ever since it appeared. The suspense in the chapter in which he tells how he was unable to find the opening to his underground dwelling and was shut out in the unbelievable cold leaves the reader fairly panting with vicarious exertion. Indeed, suspense is the keynote to the fascination of the whole narrative, and boys revel in it. Osa Johnson's *I Married Adventure* is equally popular with the girls.

A different type of adventure is to be found in the life of *Raymond L. Ditmars* by Laura W. Wood. Ditmars, author of several authoritative books on snakes, had enough adventures in the process of mastering his curious profession to satisfy the most avid thirst for the unusual. Here is a scientist and an author who began the serious study of snakes in his

boyhood with little encouragement or guidance from any direction until he was in his teens. Some of his boyhood troubles with his odd pets are really very funny, and it is surprising that his apartment-dwelling family indulged his troublesome interest as much as

they did. This is an entertaining, well-written biography that rouses fresh respect for the difficult way of the scientist. These biographies of men of action have a tremendous appeal and stir emulation in young minds as fiction rarely does.

## Using biography with children

In this sampling of available biographies for children and youth it is clear that for important periods in history and for many notable men biographies are available at almost any reading level. Take the period of the American Revolution and such men as Washington and Franklin, for example. There are the picture biographies of the d'Aulaires, the simplified stories of the heroes' boyhood in the Bobbs-Merrill series, the Initial Biographies of Genevieve Foster or Enid Meadowcroft's easy-to-read books, and, finally, the mature and detailed records of the men by James Daugherty, Clara Ingram Judson, and Jeanette Eaton. This means that in class discussions the most retarded readers will have books from which they can obtain facts, anecdotes, and a respectable over-all picture of the man and his contribution to the building of our nation. And the superior readers will have detailed records of the man.

Throughout the chapter, pairs of biographies about the same man have been suggested, and also biographies of notable contemporaries. The bibliography for this chapter will add to these suggestions.

### Correlation with school subjects

One student teacher used *Young Walter Scott* (p. 539) with a sixth-grade class which was reading some of his poems. These poems, together with the biography, led back to the old English ballads which Scott collected.

The courtroom scene in *Penn* (p. 513) dramatizes well, and is particularly important because upon that trial hung the right of jurors to have their verdicts sustained by the court. The Washington and Lafayette biographies suggest endless scenes for dramatiza-

tion and, adding the stories about Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, Paul Revere, and others, a whole pageant of colonial days leading up to the Revolution can be developed. Surely *Johnny Tremain* would be found in the thick of it, too.

There are scenes from Lincoln's boyhood which may be dramatized effectively—the "blab" school, the coming of the new stepmother, Lincoln with his rain-soaked *Life of Washington*, his farewell to his father and stepmother, and that great farewell to his fellow townsmen in Springfield with the speech that forecast the ever-growing greatness of the man. In all such plays and pageants, costume design, stage settings, and scenery would occupy the artists of the school and stimulate profitable art work for everyone.

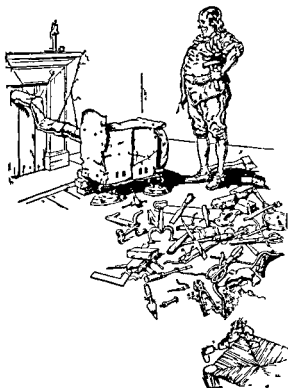
The three notable books about the Lewis and Clark expedition—James Daugherty's *Of Courage Undaunted*, Julia Davis' *No Other White Men*, and Frances Farnsworth's *Winged Moccasins*—suggest a whole series of scenes for either a play or a pageant: the gathering of the men and the start of the expedition; a scene with one of the Indian tribes—arrival, gift giving, feast, games, and dancing afterwards; winter quarters; the encounter with the bear; Charbonneau and Sacajawea hired as guides. Sacajawea may tell her story of capture. There is the dramatic meeting with the Shoshones when Sacajawea finds her brother, and then the Pacific at last. For the final scene there could be the parting with Sacajawea and her little son as the men return to the East. These and other scenes would make a wonderful series of paintings or crayon pictures to be made into a mural.

## Discussion

Reading biography opens up some excellent opportunities for airing honest differences of opinion about the acts and policies of some of these men. Why was Jefferson's clause abolishing slavery struck out of the Declaration? Was Franklin conciliatory to the English too long? Who was right in his view of Jackson's Indian policy—Davy Crockett or Sam Houston? If Sam Houston had been nominated for the presidency on the Democratic ticket, he might have been elected instead of Lincoln. Would Houston's election have prevented the Civil War? What was Lincoln's real stand on slavery at the outset of his presidency? These are all good subjects for speculation and debate, and the children can find in these biographies various evidences justifying their answers.

## Composition

Robert Lawson's *They Were Strong and Good* is especially valuable as a stimulus for writing. To start youngsters collecting and recording the unique stories about their own families is not only good motivation for writing but a good habit to grow up with. Amateur historians are contributing much lively information to our pictures of the past, and twelve-year-olds are not too young to begin a little local research. Mr. Lawson's sketches are brief, and yet each one is a dramatic unit. Such a pattern is easier for children to comprehend and try than a long biography. Even so, biography reading is almost certain to inspire some child to embark on an autobiog-



From Robert Lawson's *Ben and Me*, Little, Brown, 1939  
(book 6 x 8)

*Whether in the idyllic mood of "Beulah Land" or the relaxed Little Georgie or the world of fairy or the broadly comic as in this picture of Ben evolving the first stove, Robert Lawson's style is invariably sharp and clear.*

raphy. Some of these family sketches and personal reminiscences illustrated with kodak pictures or old photographs have given great pleasure to the children and have inspired some amazingly good writing.

## Encouraging the reading of biography

Biographies written with authenticity and a high regard for the lively human qualities of great men and women are among the newest and most important developments in children's books. To know and use them in our classrooms and to help children discover them for their individual reading is to utilize one of the richest book offerings available.

Sometimes fiction will send children to biography. An amusing example of this was in a classroom where the teacher was reading Robert Lawson's *Ben and Me* to her children. They were hilarious over it, but one day she stopped her reading and remarked, "It just occurred to me that here we are laughing over this funny story about Benjamin Frank-



Illustration by Leo Politi for *The Columbus Story* by Alice Dalgliesh, Scribner, 1955 (original in color, book 8 x 10)

*Young Columbus asks help of a queen. Note the simplicity of this picture, the almost primitive quality of the hands and features of these people. All eyes are on Columbus, leading the reader's eyes to the central figure, too.*

lin, but how much do we know about his real life?" Precious little, they soon discovered, and the teacher, too, admitted frankly that she had forgotten a good deal of what she had once known. "So—" said she, "I am not going to finish reading *Ben and Me* until you and I among us can piece together the main events of his whole life." The children rallied enthusiastically. One group took Franklin's childhood and youth, another his life through the Revolution, another his years in France and his death in this country. The local librarian could not imagine what had happened when the whole mob descended upon her demanding everything available about Benjamin Franklin. In a week's time they had their material. Every child reported some facts, and together the children covered the story of Franklin's whole life, supplemented by significant episodes from the teacher, who assured them that she, too, had been work-

ing. After that, the reading of *Ben and Me* was resumed, and the children agreed that it seemed funnier now that they knew the real facts.

Another teacher, whose children were sure they "just hated biography," used the anecdote to illumine her history periods. These anecdotes she chose from various juvenile books of biography. In the English period they discussed the anecdote and its power to reveal a man's character or attitude. The children were then to find anecdotes for themselves which would show something important about a man. They went to their school library, chose a biography that looked readable, and went to work. Sometimes the librarian guided their choices or even gave chapter references. The children enjoyed relating their anecdotes and presently were making reports of whole books. These reports led readily into the use of some of the newer biog-



raphies in connection with their history, and presently one child after another was saying with surprise, "Why, I liked that book and it was a biography!" or "I thought biography was dull, but this one was exciting." The anecdote had turned the tide.

Why should we make this effort to steer children into reading which they might not otherwise discover? Why should not biography wait until adolescence and maturity when it is a natural interest? First, because it is also a natural interest in childhood. Children have always liked to hear about the lives of their heroes provided the stories were not too ponderous. Second, because we now have appealing, authentic biographies of men of action, soundly and beautifully written for children. To omit them would be to miss one of the best recent contributions to children's reading. Hero worship begins young. Baseball idols are all right, but a child may also begin to thrill over explorers, founding fathers, great men and women who have helped to build this country. A college professor, looking over some of these new biographies for children and young people, was astonished at their use of recent research findings and at the charm of their style. He said, "Why, if our children could be raised on such books as these, they would have a background for United States, and indeed, for world history which would carry them far in college. For those who never go to college it would give a warmer appreciation of our national life than anything else. Here, in these biographies, they can see Democracy in the making."

His use of the word "warm" is apt because these *are* warm books, these new biographies. From their pages human beings emerge, confused and bewildered like ourselves, struggling blindly toward goals they are not always sure of, growing through their mistakes and failures, developing clearer purposes, picking themselves up grimly after a fall and plodding on again, pausing for an act of kindness, a breathing space for laughter, a little frolic and fun between chores.

Reading about these men and women, we find out about ourselves. They were afraid sometimes even as we are afraid, but they took no "council of their fears." They had bad tempers, but they learned to hold them in leash; maybe we can do so, too. They grew desperately tired, but still they kept at their tasks; well, after all, so can we. These biographies give us new courage and minister to our faith in the essential rightness of the world, the eventual triumph of decency and goodness over the forces of evil, when decency and goodness are backed by intelligent effort and unrelenting work. No other reading can ever quite approach the effective moral implications of a good biography. Emulation, encouragement, faith in human nature, and faith in ourselves are some of the by-products of reading such books. As James C. Johnson says in his *Biography: The Literature of Personality*:

Many successes in life give testimony, indeed, to the statement that biography, more than any other form of literature, has been known to inspire a youth with faith in himself and to give him a determination to make the most of his life. (p. 97)

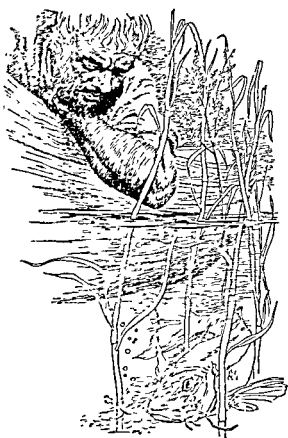


Illustration by Anthony Ravielli for  
*Men, Microscopes, and Living Things*  
 by Katherine B. Shippen, Viking, 1955 (book 5½ x 8½)

*Aristotle, the first biologist,  
 is shown observing a catfish from his  
 small boat. The details of this drawing,  
 in keeping with the book,  
 are precise and realistic.*

Anyone who has ever tried to classify anything knows that sooner or later he is going to run into a lot of odds and ends that stubbornly refuse to fall into any of his admirable categories. When this happens there is nothing to do but adopt the nonchalant philosophy of the Walrus. After all, *he* solved the ticklish problem of the "miscellaneous" in one neat verse:

"The time has come," the Walrus said,  
 "To talk of many things:  
 Of shoes—and ships—and sealing wax—  
 Of cabbages—and kings—  
 And why the sea is boiling hot—  
 And whether pigs have wings."

It is as simple as that, and very sound advice for anyone who has the temerity to try to classify children's books. Like the Walrus, this chapter treats "of many things"—of various kinds of informational books and of religious books. If this particular combination seems a little scrambled, perhaps it will be no more so than the Walrus' "cabbages and kings." But let's leave the Walrus to his flying pigs and boiling seas and turn seriously to this miscellany.

One glance at a well-stocked library for children reveals an astonishing variety of fine informational books. For example, there are excellent dictionaries and encyclopedias for

children of different ages. There are innumerable science books both about living things and the physical world. These books are not only good reference books but are a stimulus to new science interests. For the social studies there have never been such varied and delightful books, some focused on geography, some on history, some on the better understanding of other peoples, and some designed to correlate with such popular school units as stores, industries, community helpers, the cir-

cus, gardens, and the like. Most good libraries also have a fine choice of religious books for children: instructional books designed to help adults meet the child's questions and guide his ethical and religious thinking, and books planned chiefly for the enjoyment of the children. These are the fields explored briefly in this chapter: the informational books (dictionaries and encyclopedias, reference books on special subjects, science, social studies) and the religious books.

## Informational books: criteria for selecting them

As the name implies, informational books, in contrast to books of fiction, are primarily concerned with facts. The distinction between these two types is somewhat nebulous in the books for younger children. For example, *Pelle's New Suit*, like a book of fiction, tells an interesting story, but, like the informational books, is based on facts—explanation of the various processes that go into the making of a suit. In books for older children, the distinction is usually more marked. Their informational books, while trying to present facts in an interesting and attractive manner, ordinarily have no obvious story framework.

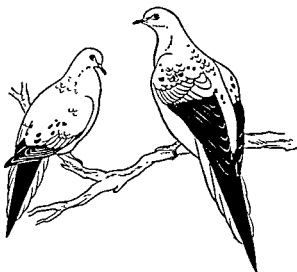
There are so many informational books available today and so many new ones appearing each year that it would be impossible to review even the most important of such books in one chapter. The best we can do here is to set up the criteria for judging these books, consider a few excellent examples of informational books, discuss how these books can be used, and suggest ways of becoming acquainted with the good books available and of keeping up with the new books coming out each year.

The first chapter of this book speaks about man's hungry curiosity, which through the centuries has kept him searching for more and more accurate information in more and more fields. Shepherds "watching their flocks by night" wondered about the stars and kept records of them. They were our first astrono-

mers, and star lore and mathematics were early studies in man's search for exact knowledge. Each succeeding generation has advanced the total information of the race along many lines. Children today are born into a world which has assembled and systematized that information in numberless books which are usually called by the names of their subjects: geography, astronomy, ornithology, chemistry, civics, or history. But children's books carry no such ponderous titles. Their informational books are called variously *Big Tree*; *Men*, *Microscopes and Living Things*; *When You Go to the Zoo*; *Paddle-to-the-Sea*; *The Earth for Sam*. The books as well as their titles are often designed to attract children to subjects they might otherwise pass by. But are these books reliable? Can a child use them and depend upon them? Do they give adequate and not oversimplified information? These are some of the questions adults should ask about the factual books they are examining for children, and these are some of the tests the books should pass before we recommend them to children.

### Scrupulous accuracy

Unless our text is accurate our reading is worse than useless. Accuracy is the most important criterion for judging any informational book. While scrupulously accurate books are available in almost every field of children's interests, misleading and inaccurate books are also on the market. There has



*Passenger Pigeons*

Illustration by Campbell Grant for *Vanishing Prairie* by Walt Disney, Simon and Schuster, 1955  
(book 6 x 8½, picture 3½ x 3)

*Vanishing Prairie, with its outstanding photographs, fascinates young naturalists. Along with lively pictures of prairie animals, there are interesting descriptions of their habits. Here is shown the passenger pigeon, once flourishing, now extinct.*

never been a greater need for reliable information in many fields than there is today to help counteract the widely disseminated misinformation to which children and adults are continually subjected in popular magazine articles and even in some books. It is particularly true of advertisements, both on television and in print. These have become the realm of the romancer. Children listen to vibrant commercials singing the praises of breakfast foods, pep pills, and purges—and believe them all. Children and many adults are like the old lady who took a certain patent medicine because "it was highly spoken of in the advertisements." By discussing programs with children, you can discover their gullibilities and encourage them

to check so-called "facts" in accurate reference books. This is one way of arming children against overcredulity and teaching them to weigh arguments, question sources, and search for facts.

But if we supply children with factual reading which is out of date or superficial or insincere, we only add to their confusion. Suppose, for instance, we give children purportedly modern books about the Holland of picturesque costumes and quaint, old-fashioned customs or about the old China of rickshaws and queues or about the South America of primitive Indian villages only. Meanwhile, newspapers, magazines, and newsreels show them pictures of progressive Holland today, China in a state of revolution,

and large South American cities. Discerning children can only conclude that their books are less reliable references than other sources. Every adult has encountered the eagle-eyed boy who scornfully rejects the picture of an outmoded airplane or finds something wrong in the drawing of a modern one. But children are not able to check the accuracy of many of their materials and they are prone to accept what "the book says." So it is imperative that every statement and the implications of every statement in their informational books be accurate.

### Convenient presentation

When we are searching for information, we want the material presented in such a way that we can find what we are looking for quickly and comfortably. This is equally true of children. The three-year-old wants a train book with pictures so clear that he can see everything he wants to know about. The eight-year-old needs bird books in which he can identify his specimen by colors and size. He does not know species yet—that will come later—and the only clues he is sure of are color and size. Older children and adults look for detailed indexing, perhaps from several points of view. The presentation of materials, in order to be convenient, must consider the age and needs of the readers and must provide the kind of clues they can use most readily.

### Clarity

The information we are seeking must be so clearly stated that we come away from our reading satisfied that we have some grasp of the subject. The eight-year-old who looks up a word in a dictionary but cannot understand the definition is not likely to repeat the process. The grown-ups' encyclopedia may leave him equally irritated because he can't comprehend the material he finds there. Clarity for one age is befuddlement for another. Children need reference books they can read and understand. But books need not be babyish or talk down to children in order to be

comprehensible. Youngsters sense patronage instantly and resent it. Information for any age level should be written directly and sensibly, with obvious respect for the reader's intelligence.

### Adequate treatment

When we are in search of facts, we want to be supplied with sufficient details to leave us reasonably certain about at least a small area of information. The amount of detail to give children is always a ticklish question. Too many details confuse them; too few make for an oversimplification that may be misleading. We have to weigh factual books for children with their ages and experiences in mind. Irrelevant details that clutter up the important ideas and obscure the facts children are looking for are especially bad. In this respect some of the early science books for children which used personification in story form were extremely poor. The child who asks how all the trees got into the forest does not want to hear about dear old Mother South Wind and little Sara Seedling, who grew up into a great big tree; he wants his facts, clear, straight, and amplified sufficiently so that he gets a fair picture of the process of foresting. It is essential that enough significant facts be given for a realistic and balanced picture.

### Style

If, in addition to measuring up to these utilitarian standards, informational books are well and interestingly written, so much the better, but utility comes first. A dictionary can hardly be expected to exude charm, but a travel book or history or science book may. The child who finds his geography or his history text full of lively facts is more apt to return to that text with a hopeful heart. If it is not interesting, he may still use it if it answers some of his questions, but he will not cherish it as he might a better composed narrative. A lively, well-written text is an invaluable bait to learning.

These are the qualities we look for in all informational books for both adults and

children—accuracy (first and above all), convenient presentation, clarity, adequate treatment, and an interesting style. For children's

books we'll add pictures—pictures so colorful and appealing that they will make readers and even specialists of the children.

## Building the child's reference library

In building a child's own reference library at least two factors should be considered: the age range of the book and the breadth and richness of the information. For instance, the eye-appeal of a book is of first importance for children under seven years old. Their references are picture books, brightly colored and as eye-catching as possible. Even for the middle group of children, seven to ten, the eye-appeal of a book is still important. Their reference books should, in addition, be easy to read and should not contain too many pages of solid text unrelieved by pictures. But while their books must present ideas simply and not in too much detail, they must give accurate and adequate information.

For inexperienced readers, such charming and reliable books as Olive Earle's *Thunder Wings: The Story of a Ruffed Grouse, Robins in the Garden, Crickets*, and others are invaluable. Large print, well-written narratives, and the author's own delightful illustrations will engage the interest of young readers. The most unusual story is that of the grouse, with its curious habit of making snow tunnels in the winter and its gay spring drumming. But robins are equally dramatic, and the life cycle of crickets will fascinate children of almost any age. Harriet Huntington has a series for even younger children, illustrated with amazingly beautiful close-up photographs of birds and beasts. Her *Let's Go Outdoors* is typical. Robert McClung is another writer for young children who can tell an absorbing story of a rood or an eagle and yet keep the text scientifically accurate.

For good readers ten to fourteen years old, there are reference books in almost every field. But these older children need, in addition to their juvenile books, standard adult references which they can grow with and

use as long as they live. Even when a child is small, these adult references can be read to him to supplement the scanty information of the juvenile texts. As the child grows in reading skill, he will know through his earlier use of the books with adults how to dip into them for himself and find what he needs. Using adult reference books builds up a child's self-respect because he knows he is sharing with adults the best information available. For example, an up-to-the-minute atlas which every map-reading member of the family rushes for and shares enthusiastically will start an interest in maps and a respect for good sources even in the small children. A family which plans and saves for an encyclopedia and then uses it lovingly and continuously will build in the children a lifelong respect for fine reference books.

There are many reference books the whole family can enjoy together, for example Bertha Parker's *The Golden Treasury of Natural History* and *The Golden Book of Science*, with their wealth of information and fine pictures in color. Anna Comstock's *Handbook of Nature Study* is an invaluable source book for the answers to the questions children and grown-ups bring back from their outdoor explorations. One boy used to take the *Natural History* close to where his father was reading the paper. Presently the boy would say, "Father, did you know this?" and read an excerpt aloud. Night after night, father and son would end up on the davenport, reading and discussing the book together. And by the way, in any field it is best for us amateur scientists to say frankly to a child, "That is a question for experts. Let's look it up together." Book in hand, we can read and retell to suit the age of the inquirer. This frank and interested consulting of sources

builds up the child's respect for intellectual honesty, opens his eyes to the fun of fine reference books, and helps establish the reference habit without pain or pedantry.

In various fields there are fine reference books to provide authentic information about subjects the child is already interested in or to stimulate new or wider interests.

For music there are many books to lure children into better listening. *This Is an Orchestra* by Elsa Posell is a useful book to introduce children to each kind of orchestral instrument. Clear photographs supplement the descriptions of percussion instruments, woodwinds, brasses, and strings. *How Music Grew* by Marion Bauer and Ethel Peyser, an older book, gives a brief history of the growth of music from primitive beginnings to modern times. Such song collections as Frank Luther's, Carl Carmer's, and the ballad collections listed for Chapter 5 will stimulate singing in families and school. On the other hand, the best books about opera have gone out of print. This is probably because grand opera is a luxury item found only in a few large cities, and has not yet been popularized by television as symphonies have been popularized by radio and records.

There are more and more excellent books

for children about art and artists. Chapter 18 discussed Elizabeth Ripley's fine books about individual artists with reproductions of their major works. There are also Katharine Gibson's *Pictures to Grow Up With* and *More Pictures to Grow Up With*. Like those in Mrs. Ripley's books, the illustrations are in black and white, but they include reproductions of pictures and art objects from all over the world. V. M. Hillyer and Edward Huey's *Child's History of Art* is still a sterling reference. Thomas Craven's *The Rainbow Book of Art* (p. 538) is an invaluable addition to any library. Written for children and youth, the text has unusual charm and will please adults as well as children. If, in addition, you possess Mr. Craven's adult book, *A Treasury of Art Masterpieces; from the Renaissance to the Present Day*, use it to supplement *The Rainbow Book of Art*. Just as you would use anecdotes from adult biographies to enrich the child's knowledge of a man, so you can use this adult book with its wealth of pictures and glorious colors to interest children in art. Many teachers have taken their personal copies of this book to show their classes and have been rewarded by the children's growing interest in painting and their increased respect for fine books.

## Dictionaries and encyclopedias

As soon as the child can read, he should have reference books of his own. Then when questions come up you can say to him, "You look that up in your book and I'll look it up in mine and we'll see if they agree." Checking one reference against another is a good habit. If the child's text agrees with the adult text, adult prestige is added to the child's book. Certainly juvenile dictionaries and encyclopedias are good to use in this way and are a fine investment for children. Their definitions and information are suited to the child's understanding, and their print is adapted to young eyes.

The child who owns his own personal dictionary should discover early the fun of words—not just the words of the spelling lesson but all the strange and glorious words floating around in print and on the air. A great many adults have acquired a strange self-consciousness about "the twenty-five-dollar word"—as if it were a crime to use one of the good old Latin derivatives if there is a one-syllable Anglo-Saxon substitute. After all *guts* may not always be the happiest description of *stamina*. Perhaps writers and orators in the past did use words pompously, but that should not mean that this generation

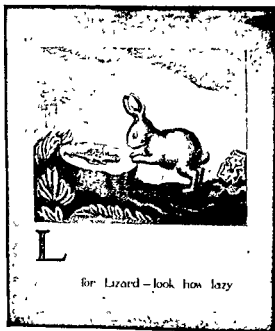


Illustration from Wanda Gág's *The ABC Bunny*, Coward-McCann, 1933 (book 9½ x 11¾)

*Contrasted masses of light and dark, rhythmic lines, and a strong center of interest make the pictures for The ABC Bunny among the finest Wanda Gág has ever done. The text is equally good.*

must do penance for their sins by never venturing out of the small-word class. The infinite range of the English language was developed by the infiltration of words from many peoples—words which can express fine shades of meaning with precision and discrimination. Different sorts of words are needed when we wish to exult or lament or exhort or voice our praise. And when we do speak in praise of noble men, we need such words as *courage*, *fortitude*, *stamina*, *endurance*, and *fidelity* rather than the Anglo-Saxon monosyllable.

A feeling for the right word at the right time comes only through long experimentation and some adventuring. A four-year-old looked around the playground and announced loudly, "What audacity!" He looked at the adults to see how they were taking it and shouted again, "What audacity!" Throughout the day he tried out his bright, new word with evident enjoyment. A ten-year-old, blissfully savoring a new dessert, remarked happily, "You know, Mother, this is downright sootle." He meant *subtle*, of course, but his mother said, "Oh, what a good word for it! I think you are exactly right. It really is soo-

tle. Or is that sometimes pronounced *sūt'it*? Let's look it up, for it certainly is the word we want." These first fine slings at word-using should be encouraged, and nothing helps more than a handy dictionary, ready to be seized upon when needed—right in the middle of dinner or a geography lesson. There is nothing more satisfying than proving a point, discovering a fact, or settling some airy guesswork—by the use of accurate and handy reference books. Mrs. Duff gives a delightful description of such dictionary play in her family, where the dictionary was considered standard equipment for the dinner table—a condiment, or "something to add relish to food."<sup>1</sup> A child's dictionary should be handy, too, if only to avoid putting young eyes to the strain of fine adult print.

Incidentally, children can be introduced to dictionary arrangement by way of alphabet books. There are many excellent ones for this purpose, for example, any of Edward Lear's alphabet verses and, of course, Wanda Gág's *ABC Bunny*. Children are amused and fascinated by these books, learn their alphabet by way of them, and often enjoy making alphabet books of their own. These activities give them a pleasant start toward understanding the dictionary's alphabetical arrangement.

Most adults believe children should have their own dictionaries, but they are not so sure that youngsters need their own encyclopedias. In homes where books must be carefully budgeted, many families feel that the adult encyclopedia is the better investment. When children are young, parents can help them with it. Then by the time they are ten

<sup>1</sup>Annis Duff, *Bequest of Wings*, pp 90-91.



or eleven, the good readers will be using it by themselves. The best adult encyclopedias last for a lifetime; they may become dated in a few respects, but the bulk of the material will carry a child through high school, college, and adult life. If a choice must be made between a juvenile and adult encyclopedia, then decidedly the adult set should be purchased because of its greater richness and long-range value. But when a family can afford both, the child should have his own set.

There are three good children's encyclopedias today,<sup>1</sup> and families which have pur-

chased one of them for their children praise the investment. Certainly a well-worn encyclopedia on a child's bookshelf is a cheerful sight. It seems to guarantee a human being who is going to enjoy ideas, all of the things his mind can explore. Intellectual curiosity is an invaluable asset, one of the durable satisfactions of life, and juvenile encyclopedias can minister to its growth. Like the juvenile dictionary, the juvenile encyclopedia should be standard equipment in schools, and teachers in the middle and upper grades should consciously promote its use.

## Science books for children

Some children are more readily lured into reading by informational books than by fiction, and they should have books which meet their special interests and promote their hobbies. In no field has there been a greater improvement than in the science books for children. It is now possible to find sound, well-written, and well-illustrated books to meet or encourage almost any scientific hobby a child may develop. This was certainly not true a few years ago when elaborate personifications about "Aqua the Water Baby" with his papa and mamma water-drops managed to confuse any inquiries about evaporation and rainfall. Certainly in science books no saccharine stories are needed to glamorize information which is in itself absorbingly interesting. Today, the wealth of good science books for budding naturalists is well worth our study. It is a sign of the times that a 1956 runner-up for the Newbery Medal was Katherine B. Shippen's *Men, Microscopes, and Living Things*, a fascinating history of studies of living matter from those of Aristotle to those of Darwin and his modern successors. The book is both science and "distinguished literature."

One of the outstanding modern authors of children's science books is Herbert Zim of

the University of Illinois. After his *Mice, Men and Elephants* for adolescents, he began writing such books as *Lightning and Thunder*, *The Sun*, and *What's Inside of Engines?* for eight- to twelve-year-olds. For readers from seven to ten he has written *Frogs and Toads*, *Snakes*, *Rabbits*, and many other books. These, together with the First Book series—*The First Book of Snakes* and the First Books of birds, fishing, bees, stones, and so forth, will give children under twelve a substantial reference library which they can read for themselves. These fine books, well illustrated with pictures and diagrams, will stimulate an interest where there was none. Adults as well as children, brought up to date by these books, are often moved to read further. For this reason, the home or school library should also have standard references like Anna Comstock's *Handbook of Nature Study*.

We should not only know the books but how children use them and how by way of them they have sometimes developed lifelong hobbies or a lifework. Once two city children, lying on their stomachs and peering over the bank of a ravine, watched an old woodchuck help himself to an egg from the nest of a song sparrow, suck it appreciatively, and throw the shell away. They could hardly believe their eyes. They did not even know what the fat, waddling animal was, or whether

<sup>1</sup>See bibliography for this chapter.

he might next attack them ferociously. But after the woodchuck ate a second egg, they indignantly pelted him with the peaches they were eating and were relieved to see him waddle away with as much speed as he could manage. The children ran back to their cottage full of curiosity about this waddling epicure, but it was not until they went to town and consulted the science books in the library that they identified him. Even then they discovered no reference to his egg-sucking proclivities, and so they enjoyed all the satisfaction of having done some original research. They became ardent observers of wild life that summer, and just as ardent verifiers of what they observed. "After all," one of them said, "it's no good just seeing things if you don't know what they are."

### Birds

A four-year-old was confined to the house one winter with picture books, fairy tales, and stories of many kinds to entertain her. But she became devoted to a bird book with large colored pictures which someone lent her. This became her inseparable companion, and she preferred it to all other books. By the time she was out of the house again she could name correctly every bird in the book, and so could the weary adults who had read it to her, over and over. Of course she still could not recognize the live birds outdoors—that was a different and harder learning which came more gradually. Meanwhile her passion for this particular book led her father to buy it for her, together with a companion volume. This meant an expensive investment at the time and seemed almost foolish for so young a child, but she never tired of her hobby. Over the years she used the books in the city parks, on summer vacations by the shore, and in woods and fields. By the time she was twelve she was able quickly and accurately to identify a large number of birds. Later she used these books in college classes in ornithology. Somewhat battered but still intact, they served to launch her own children on a pleasant acquaintance with birds, and now, re-

bound, they are beginning a new career of usefulness with the third generation.

When the family bought the books for their little girl, they meant a considerable outlay of money, but over a period of forty-five years the cost was negligible and the values incalculable. Those books provided three generations of children with a special field of interest and enjoyment, a hobby that has been a delight to every one of them from childhood on through adult years.

There is something very satisfying about recognizing different species of birds. One adult had never encountered a woodcock, for instance, but knew his picture well. One day, when he suddenly saw this long-billed recluse teetering busily through the woods, he could hardly contain himself, and when he saw the woodcock twice, doing his grotesque and incredible dance, the man was astounded by his good luck. Yet he would not have recognized and appreciated what he saw with the same certitude and excitement if he had not made the acquaintance of this feathered gnome in a book. For such general information, look at John Kieran's *Introduction to Birds*. Addison Webb's *Birds in Their Homes* describes the nesting habits of fifty familiar birds. Both books are illustrated in color.

### Insects

A child came home in a high state of excitement from a late summer walk in a nearby park. He had seen hundreds and thousands of butterflies, he said, hanging on all the trees. No one in the family would believe him, although his description was detailed and it never wavered. The boy insisted that there were monarch butterflies by thousands and thousands draping and festooning all the trees. Not until he got to school and told a sympathetic teacher his wild tale did he get any encouragement. Her own information was vague, but together they found a book by Cecile Hulse Matschat, *American Butterflies and Moths*. The minute the child saw that beautiful cover he said, "That's just the way they looked, only there were thou-

*Animal families are a never-ending source of interest and curiosity. By keeping small animals in kindergarten, caring for them, watching their habits, making shelters for them, listening to stories and poems about them, and looking at animal picture books, children answer many of their own questions and develop wholesome attitudes toward animals.*

sands of them." Inside the book was a description of the strange migrations of the monarch butterfly, and the child's remarkable experience was verified. Classrooms, or at least each school library, should be full of such books, ready to identify the rare bug, the rare bird, the rare experience that children come upon because they still have eyes to see and feet that carry them exploring the far corners of parks and woods.

Ignoring the classifications of science, the young child explores whatever is at hand and investigates such diverse finds as caterpillars, turtles, tree toads, starfish, mice, barnyard fowls, garter snakes, and frogs. One small boy came into a kindergarten with a walking stick (a variety of insect) carefully preserved in a mason jar. No one in his family had known its name, and he was thrilled when the teacher took him to the school library, found a book on insects, and showed him a picture of his captive with its name beneath. "Why, it's right in the book—my bug's right in the book!" the boy told the children over and over. But what to feed the creature? How provide a proper habitat? Such questions kept the teacher busy after school hours. Next day, she showed the books she had used and told her findings. As a result, the walking stick lived comfortably in their room for several days while the children watched him. Then they set him free to go his own walking-stick way.

### Snakes

Most children are fascinated with snakes if some foolish adult has not taught them to be afraid. Snake books are of particular interest to older children. All children should be



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taught enough about the species they are likely to encounter to know which ones are poisonous and which ones are harmless. They should also learn the value of snakes to farmers in helping keep down rodents, and they should acquire a more enlightened point of view about reptiles than most adults possess today. Irmengarde Eberle's *Hop, Skip, and Fly* (see p. 577), *The First Book of Snakes*, or Herbert Zim's *Snakes* will supply a good introduction to snake lore for younger children. This book should be supplemented, for better readers, by Ditmars' *Reptiles of North America* or *Snakes Alive* by Clifford Pope.

### Pets

Pets—domestic and wild—can minister to the child's expanding emotional life. The warm, furry feel of little rabbits and the boisterous affection of a dog can comfort him when he is hurt or distressed. They will call out his own tenderness in return, his protectiveness, and his sense of responsibility. This at least is true of children who are themselves practiced in gentleness. But if children are roughly or cruelly treated in their homes, they in turn



Illustration by Corydon Bell for *Snow*  
by Thelma Harrington Bell, Viking, 1954  
(book 7 x 10, picture 5 x 6½)

*How is snow formed? What kinds of snow are there? How are igloos made? This book will tell you.*

*Here, after the development of one snowflake has been shown, the artist depicts it as one of the millions that make up a storm, and contrasts the natural force of swirling snow with the mechanical force of a city.*

will handle little animals in the same way, venting on them the resentment they themselves feel at being pushed around. Add to this the unknowing sadism of childhood, and the animals may suffer cruelly. All children should be taught how to handle animals carefully. Before such training is accomplished, pets must be zealously protected from children who are too young to know what they are doing, as well as from children who have had little or no experience with gentleness.

In Clare Newberry's picture-stories of animals (p. 472) the kittens, bunnies, and puppies are drawn with such tenderness that they usually call forth a similar tenderness in children and are a good preparation for the real animals. The fine picture-stories listed in Chapter 17 will help in this respect. These books should be supplemented with Margery Bianco's *All about Pets*. This practical and delightfully written little book is planned to teach children how to treat the pets which are so pathetically dependent upon their well-meaning but often misguided efforts.

If all children could grow up with livestock as the farm child does, they could acquire biological learning casually with the cycle of the seasons. If a farm experience is impossible, all children could at least have experience with pet animals. In city homes, not even experience with pets is possible or practicable for the majority of children, and so the school has to take a hand. It is past belief what teachers have suffered trying to house and care for families of rabbits, guinea pigs, white mice, and such orphans of the wilderness as opossums, woodchucks, and an occasional skunk. The children's passionate devotion to these creatures is the teacher's reward.

Such martyrs to the advancement of science in the young need information on how to feed, house, and care for these pets. What kind of behavior is to be expected of them? There are special books on goldfish, parakeets, and making and maintaining an aquarium, and such fine general books as *Odd Pets* by Lilo Hess and Dorothy Hogner, *Pets* by Frances Chrystie, and, for older readers, *Home Made Zoo* by Sylvia Greenberg and Edith Raskin. See also *Our Small Native Animals*, p. 579.

If you know your tiny flying squirrel

may perish of fright, you'll move more cautiously. Many adults would have given a great deal in their youth to have known with certainty how to make tree toads happy or how to help a motherless woodchuck become better adjusted. It is a lucky child who can acquire a wild thing now and then, if only to nurse it back to health or tide it over its homeless youth and then eventually restore it to the wilds where it belongs. When city children cannot have such experiences at home, the school that supplies them is a benefactor indeed.

One first-grade teacher nursed a pair of motherless opossums to full maturity in her classroom. The children were fascinated with the creatures, which hung composedly by their tails and viewed the world upside down when they viewed it at all. Mostly they slept. But eventually, the little possums became so fond of the children that their arrival in the morning was a signal for the nocturnal pair to wake up, be fed, be petted, play a little, and then firmly resume their sleep, undisturbed by reading groups, rhythms, or anything else. When spring came, some of the children journeyed to the woods with their teacher, near to the place where the little possums had been found, and there they turned them loose. It was an exciting farewell party, but farewell it was. Nip and Tuck seemed to know they had come home, and after a little preliminary sniffing around, they made off with considerable speed for newcomers. Needless to say, the children who cared for these pets had read everything they could find about opossums.

A school which had a small greenhouse raised a little skunk from babyhood. He, too, was an orphan of the forest and a charming one. They kept him in the greenhouse for their own protection because they did not wish to remove his sac, lest he be helpless when he was returned to the woods in the spring. The children named him Sachet and were exceedingly fond of him. He liked to play and be tickled behind the ears and under the chin like any other kitten. He was a hand-

some, well-behaved pet, but the adults confessed to considerable relief when Sachet was safely back with his relatives.

Children who have such experiences as these will not only read about their own particular pet, but will voluntarily read about other animals as well.

#### Weather, stars, and such

"Why is the snow falling crooked?" asked a four-year-old, and presently solved his own problem—"The wind's blowing it. That's why." Wind and weather are phenomena we are interested in all our lives.

"Why are the bushes all covered with ice, Mother?" asked another four-year-old, and Mother, in a hurry, replied,

"Oh, because it rained last night."

Then the child pulled her hand hard and stopped stock-still.

"But mother," he protested, "it's rained before and there hasn't been any ice on the bushes."

The nursery school, hearing about this conversation, performed some experiments in freezing and thawing and freezing again, until the children understood the process. When there was snow, they used a magnifying glass to examine snow crystals and, after that, brought in books which had pictures of a great variety of snow crystals. With children, this is the order their science study might well follow: the experience first with children's questions and requests for more information, then the books brought in to supplement the simple experiments and open up new avenues of curiosity.

Many librarians say that there is a continuous demand for books about the stars, both from schools and from homes, and fortunately there are excellent books for almost any age. The huge *Golden Book of Astronomy* by Rose Wyler and Gerald Ames is popular and usable. H. A. Rey's *Find the Constellations* includes star maps for the different seasons. There is a new edition of Robert H. Baker's *When the Stars Come Out* which is fine for the whole family and for older chil-

dren. Winter has always seemed the best time for star study in the schools. Then the moon and stars come within the day of even the youngest children, and, even in smoky cities, shine with sufficient brilliance to fascinate almost anyone of any age. In homes, the interest in stars may be a continuous and growing one over the years, especially if it is reinforced with adult enthusiasm, adequate books, and a good star map. Star study is more fun when several in the family work at it together.

Such informal coöperative study recalls one family in which the mother, father, and four boys all discovered stars together. Their summer place was completely isolated from other people, and on hot nights they used to take their cots up to a breezy hillside. There, lying on their backs, with the whole dazzling display of the heavens overhead, they became interested in stars. They exhausted their scanty knowledge of planets and constellations in short order; so Father was dispatched to town to get some books to help them out. He came back well supplied with books, and a star map besides. Between the usual chores and preoccupations of camp life, the family didn't do much with the books or map in the daytime, but once on their hillside at night, with the aid of a flashlight, they really made some progress. After about fifteen or twenty minutes of star-gazing and identification, references would be put away. Someone said a psalm, someone said a prayer, and they were off to sleep. Three of the boys were flyers in World War II. They must have remembered, up there in the starry loneliness of the heavens, the look of those same stars from their safe little cots on the hillside with the family all around. Perhaps, flying blind, they heard again the voice of their father saying quietly, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," then their mother's warm "Good night," and their own sleepy responses, "Good night, good night, good night." Stars and family love and God's love, all tied into a single association

of happy security! Perhaps it helped those boys in a time when all security was temporarily gone from the world. The stars have helped men before.

Chemical sets for home experiments have stimulated a tremendous interest in chemistry with comparatively young children. Now there are books to answer their increasing number of questions and to encourage further interest.<sup>1</sup>

Simple experiments with magnets, electricity, and principles of mechanics may profitably be undertaken with children of eight or nine or sometimes with even younger ones. Children are enormously interested in the various machines they encounter on city streets—machines for excavating, elevating, prying loose, or filling in. These invariably stimulate questions. For many of our major machines there used to be toy models which operated perfectly. These were especially useful for close-range observation and for the demonstration of mechanical principles. In addition to these models, children need books which answer their questions at their own level and open for them wider fields of exploration. Such books are available today—well written, well illustrated, and comparatively easy to read.<sup>1</sup>

Mechanics-minded or chemistry-minded fathers can help their children greatly. A teacher who is weak in these fields can usually discover an informed parent who is glad to come to the classroom to demonstrate and explain. No one can be a specialist in every field, and no one should feel any embarrassment about admitting a lack of information. Sound books and the specialist for consultation will help compensate for teachers' individual areas of blankness.

### Boys and the outdoor world

Some children, as has been observed, can be more readily lured into reading through informational books than through stories. This is frequently and especially true of boys. One

<sup>1</sup>See bibliography for this chapter.

Illustration from Mary and Conrad Buff's *Big Tree*,  
Viking, 1946 (book 7¼ x 10¼)

*Conrad Buff, concerned with  
problems of light, finds a  
compatible subject in the  
occasional shafts of brightness  
that break the cathedral-like  
gloom of a forest.*

*Here sunlight filters down  
on a huge Sequoia, "Wawona,"  
and is repeated in the  
shadowy background. Young  
Buck and Old Buck approach  
each other warily, prepared  
to fight, while the does  
seem unconcerned. The artist  
communicates a feeling  
of drama and mystery in the  
contrast between an ancient  
tree and the fleeting events  
it witnesses.*

fifth-grade teacher found herself with a preponderance of boys in her room—nice boys, but decidedly not bookish. The school backed up to a wooded ravine through which a small stream flowed. There were many birds there and various small creatures of both land and stream. Of course it was an easy matter to interest the children in them. The teacher brought her own science books to school and borrowed others from the library. Whatever specimens they saw they attempted to identify in their books, but certain favorite books from the library would eventually have to be returned. These the children felt they ought to own; so with the proceeds of a cookie sale, they purchased their first science reference books. Their pride in their library was tremendous, and younger children were encouraged to bring their science questions to this class for solution. With the books, their museum specimens increased also. These were kept in one room which was a kind of science museum or laboratory for the whole building. The "museum" contained birds' nests, rocks, shells, pressed flowers, leaves, seed collections,



a few insect and butterfly specimens, aquariums, vivariums, plants, and rotating pets—that is, pets which were brought to school for a day or a week and then taken home.

In the spring these fifth-grade boys, fired by their year of intensive outdoor observations and indoor use of pertinent books, conceived a really big idea, which with the help of their teacher they worked out systematically and carefully. They wanted a general science library for the whole school as a part of the science room. They worked up



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*A young raconteur has an attentive audience. Talks about experiences, short trips, stories, and picture books are kindergarteners' introduction to the social studies and sciences.*  
*East Lake School; teacher, Mrs. Sara Williams Price.*

an impressive plea to the PTA. for funds. A composite of all the best ideas of the group was made, and a spokesman chosen. He addressed the PTA. with such conviction that a sizable amount of money was appropriated to start a permanent collection of science books for the use of the whole school. The boys agreed to donate their own prized shelf of books as a nucleus, and they also

agreed to be responsible for selecting other books for the new library. Because of the work of this one class and the science library they initiated, that whole school has been more than ordinarily science conscious. The boys themselves made a decided improvement in reading, gained confidence in books as sources of information, and developed a steadily widening interest in nature.<sup>1</sup>

### Social studies for the youngest

People who readily understand the interest of small children in various phases of science are often surprised and a little amused at the idea of four- and five-year-olds being initiated into the social studies. History, geography, civics, economics, and all the

other academic fields of the social studies are hardly subjects for young children, yet they all have their beginnings in the nursery. Birthdays and festivals mark the be-

<sup>1</sup>Caledonia School, East Cleveland, Ohio, teacher, Miss Helen Scott.



ginning of the child's sense of time. "Last Christmas I was only four," says an elderly five-year-old. Making his first bow to history, he may learn that George Washington was president before Abraham Lincoln. Geography begins when the three-year-old knows his own street and downtown and perhaps the local lake or river. The fours use glibly the names of faraway places where someone in the family has traveled. Notions of mine and thine, fair play, family laws, traffic laws—these are their introduction to government. A piggy bank initiates them into the economics of saving. So you can find the recognizable beginnings of all the other studies of man, his institutions, and his ways of living reflected in the young child's narrow and intensely personal interest in the world he lives in. His books, in turn, minister to these interests: books on trains, trucks, Indians, aviators, and policemen. Books are available to meet his varied social-studies interests, some of them made to specification, as slick and synthetic as the newest plastic, but many of them excellent.

These social-studies books begin for the youngest as his books begin in every field—with pictures. Big picture books of trains, airplanes, and farmyards are beautiful to look at and as informative as the four- and five-year-old can comprehend. Then come such forthright narratives as *The Little Auto* (p. 396) and *Pelle's New Suit* (p. 397), informational stories of unusual charm. When we use such books, we don't say to a child who is entranced with the sequential pictures of *Pelle*, "Now this is a story about the evolution of wool cloth." We don't have to, because the child who lives with *Pelle* over the years and loves *Pelle's* blue suit as much as if it were his own will know that evolution by heart. Nor will the child who has pondered over *The Little House* (p. 340) ever see a small dilapidated dwelling in a crowded city street without wondering if it, too, was not once a little house in the country with apple trees by its side and a clear view of the stars. Has this young reader of

*The Little House* learned about the evolution of the cities? Of course he has. He knows it well in terms of one small house made forever memorable in beautiful pictures and a significant text.

The Carolyn Haywood *Betsy* books (p. 400) are full of sound social meanings for young children. Perhaps their chief value is their happy interpretation of home and school relationships. The children love them as stories, but they value them too because *Betsy's* school is so much like their school and *Betsy's* friends like their friends.

Such stories, rich in social meanings but primarily good stories, are few and far between. So, too, good informational stories of the caliber of *Pelle* and *The Little House* are not plentiful. But mediocre or poor informational stories are coming from the presses in staggering numbers. Most of them are written to fit into a school unit or activity: food supplies in the city, safety, neighborhood stories. Too often these books are very dull reading. They have no sparkle, no element of surprise, no fun about them. Pedantically bent on informing and improving the young, they are examples of the didacticism of our day, and are almost as boring as their moralistic predecessors. It is the old idea of sugar-coating with a story the informative pill a particular age or period believes in. Just now many writers apparently regard social studies as the pill which has to be overly sweet in order to be accepted by children. But the sugar-coating process results in just as arid reading as it did in the days when Merton and Sanford were paired to exhibit virtue and folly for the benefit of the young mind. To be convincing, children's stories in any field need a theme of sufficient strength to generate a good plot in which things happen and a climax is achieved. When both theme and plot are weak, neither beautiful pictures nor a utilitarian relationship to a unit in social studies can save the book from triviality.

Fortunately, it is not necessary to use these self-conscious made-to-specification stories. Along with a few excellent informational



Illustration from Leo Politi's *Little Leo*, Scribner, 1931 (original in color, book 8 x 10, picture 3 x 4)

*Little Leo introduces Indian costumes and war whoops to his Italian cousins and friends. Note the three-cornered smile, the heart-shaped face of a typical Politi child. Such a story as this is a good starter to help children become interested in learning about other lands.*

tales, there are many fine factual books available—in picture form for the youngest, but with enough straightforward explanatory text to amplify the pictures. For examples, consider some of the books about the country, the city, and the circus. The city and country are attractively contrasted in a number of books besides Virginia Burton's *Little House*. Rosemary and Richard Dawson's *A Walk in the City* conveys the delight a small child finds in a city park. And Lee Kingman's *Peter's Long Walk* is the tender story of a little country boy's search for companionship. So Alvin Tresselt's *Wake Up, Farm!* might be paired with Dorothy Marino's *Little Angel's Puppy* with its setting in a city market.

Oddly enough, circus books come and go out of print with astonishing rapidity. It is a tribute to the quality of Marjorie Flack's *Wait for William* and Margot Austin's *Barney's Adventure* that they have survived. That incomparable pair, Will and Nicolas, have given small children a more complete picture of the Big Show in *Circus Ruckus*. Text and pictures are all action, and the hilarious climax brings a prompt "Read it again."

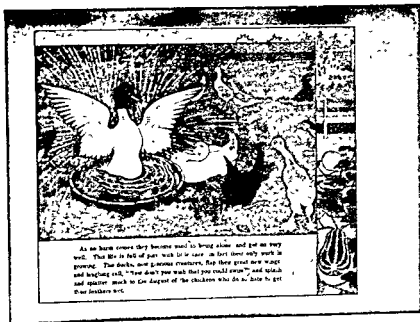
Even history may begin for the young child instructively but with charm. The picture biographies of the d'Aulaires (p. 519) delight children as young as five and as old as eight. And right along with these go the beguiling stories of long ago by Alice Dalgliesh (p. 444) and her lively accounts of Thanksgiving and the Fourth of July. Wilma Pitchford Hays' *The Story of Valentine, Pilgrim Thanksgiving*, and *Christmas on the Mayflower* will add reality and color to those days. Her narratives are written with more details than Miss Dalgliesh's and are for somewhat older children. These stirring books are based on research, and all of them are beautifully illustrated. They make an admirable introduction to the past for young children.

So for these same children, the introduction to peoples of other lands begins not with a study of terrain, products, cities, and country, but with appealing picture-stories that show the people to be more like us than different. Chapter 16, *Other Times and Places*, has many examples, such as Taro Yashima's books and Eleanor Frances Lattimore's *Little Pear*. Then there are Leo Politi's *Little Leo* and Clyde Bulla's *The Poppy Seeds*. There is no didacticism in any of these warm stories of children who play and work, get into mischief, and redeem themselves even as young citizens of the United States do.

The younger the child, the more his concepts of the social world in which he lives must develop out of real experiences. While good informational books like those just discussed are helpful in supplementing actual

Illustration by E. Boyd Smith  
for *Chicken World*, Putman, 1910  
(original in color, book 10 3/4 x 8 1/4)

*Beautiful in color and design,  
E. Boyd Smith's pictures of  
barnyard fowls interpret the  
characteristics of the different  
species with accuracy and  
humor. Note the border  
design of plant life.*



observations, such books are not so important or so numerous for young children as they are, say, about the third-grade level or when the child is approximately nine or ten years old. Then the quality and number of social-

studies books become genuinely impressive. One book, Hendrik Willem Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind*, pioneered in this field and left its mark on succeeding writers. It is worth detailed consideration.

## Social studies for older children

Hendrik Willem Van Loon  
*The Story of Mankind*

Hendrik Willem Van Loon's *The Story of Mankind*, which received the first Newbery Medal, is the history of man's origin and evolution. This book still remains an unexcelled summary of man's slow march toward civilization, two steps forward and one step back, never quite slipping down into primeval slime, but always somehow or other inching forward with persistent curiosity and effort.

Man was the last to come but the first to use his brain for the purpose of conquering the forces of nature. That is the reason why we are going to study him, rather than cats or dogs or horses or any of the other animals, who, all in their own way, have a very interesting historical development behind them. (p. 3)

So Hendrik Van Loon announces his reason for this study. He traces man from his be-

ginnings through all the major stages of historical development; for example, the wanderings of the Jews, Caesar's western conquests, the rise of towns, the period of explorations and discoveries, the rise of factories and machinery. Periods and movements are broken with brief character studies of "world shakers" who have helped change historical destinies. There are also brief glimpses of the development of the arts, and the whole panorama is illumined with Van Loon's inimitable sketches. His title for the last chapter, referring to World War I, is significant—"The Great War, Which Was Really the Struggle for a New and Better World." It closes with these two paragraphs:

And the moral of the story is a simple one. The world is in dreadful need of men who will assume the new leadership—who will have the courage of their own visions and who will recognize clearly that we are only at the beginning

of the voyage, and have to learn an entirely new system of seamanship.

They will have to serve for years as mere apprentices. They will have to fight their way to the top against every possible form of opposition. When they reach the bridge, mutiny of an envious crew may cause their death. But some day, a man will arise who will bring the vessel safely to port, and he shall be the hero of the ages. (p. 465)

It is too bad that Hendrik Van Loon did not live to interpret World War II, climaxing with man's fearful instrument of self-annihilation, the atomic bomb. Even so, the last two paragraphs still stand. The vision and integrity exemplified in these closing words are typical of the book as a whole. Writing about *The Story of Mankind* in the *Horn Book*, Frances Clarke Sayers says:

Van Loon gave a whole generation of writers in the field of non fiction the courage to be learned and gay at one and the same time. After *The Story of Mankind*, the death knell was rung for any book which did not communicate to children the excitement which should be inherent in all processes of learning.<sup>1</sup>

Although this book lies well up in the junior and senior high school reading levels, there are chapters which can be used with younger children. The first ten, for instance, are thrilling to read aloud. So, too, are some of the Greek and Roman sections, and the chapters on "...Strange Reports of Something Which Had Happened in the Wilderness of the North American Continent . . .," "A Chapter of Art," or the ones about the Greek or the Elizabethan theater. This is a rich book indeed, one to buy a child for use over a period of years or one to put into school libraries, not only for a teacher's reference but as a model of scholarship dealt out with a light touch and a persuasive informality. Van Loon's sketches are curiously interpretative and right. At first glance, they look like mere scrawls, but they make the words come alive. Look at that contrasting pair, "Man Power and Machine Power," or

the startling frontispiece, "The Scene of Our History Is Laid upon a Little Planet, Lost in the Vastness of the Universe"; these are good pictures and good words. This is a book to pick up again and again.

Van Loon's pioneer book undoubtedly exerted some influence upon the new biographies for children. His brief biographies, interpolated into the historical narrative, are as creative as anything in the book. One of the most remarkable is his "Story of Joshua of Nazareth, Whom the Greeks Called Jesus." He tells the story in the form of letters written by an imaginary Roman contemporary who is looking up the whole matter for his uncle. These letters make the sequence of events understandable and moving. In contrast to this exquisitely detached and suggestive characterization of the Nazarene is Van Loon's earthy, ruthless, but understanding picture of Napoleon. These biographies are told with a sense of drama, so that they unfold with something of the surprise of fiction. The hero may be an enigma, baffling and disturbing, but he emerges a real person. This conception of biography certainly paved the way for such fine books as *Leader by Destiny* (p. 527), *Penn* (p. 516), and *Abe Lincoln Grows Up* (p. 534).

### Geography and history

For children, history and geography merge in the study of people. And Van Loon exerted a powerful influence upon writers in both fields. He made, for instance, amusing use of the old picture-map. Today there are innumerable examples of this—picture-maps to pin on the wall and to illustrate such books as Mabel Pyne's *The Little Geography of the United States*. Since Van Loon's time, lively writing together with colorful and often witty illustrations make today's history and geography books fascinating reading for children. Factually sound books that bring other people, places, and times to life are invaluable supplements to the textbooks. There are outstanding writers and illustrators working in these two fields today, far too many to

<sup>1</sup>*The Horn Book*, May-June 1944, p. 157.

Illustration from Holling C. Holling's  
*Tree in the Trail*, Houghton Mifflin, 1942  
(original in color, book 8½ x 11).

*You can be sure that every visible detail of these wagons is correct because Holling C. Holling never puts brush to canvas until such details have been verified. Here the wagon train is struggling to cross Raton Pass, the most difficult part of the Trail. The tremendous effort required can be seen in the straining oxen and frantic men. In the background, timeless and serene, a great, snow-covered mountain provides a contrast to their urgency. The "tree in the Trail," which has grown from a sapling to a giant cottonwood and died of old age, appears in this picture as an ox yoke.*



consider in detail. But a few examples may suggest some of the variety of the books, the sound scholarship behind them, and their child appeal.

#### **Holling C. Holling** **Paddle-to-the-Sea**

The books of Holling C. Holling are a unique contribution to geography, history, and science for children. Because of his painstaking research, it takes the author three or four years to produce each book. That he should be not only a scientist but an artist is sheer good luck for children.

*Paddle-to-the-Sea* is an unusual book and an excellent one to use with geography. It tells the story of a small canoe which was made by an Indian boy far to the north, in the Nipigon country. In the tiny canoe the boy placed the kneeling figure of an Indian, carved with his paddle in his hand. On the underside of the canoe the boy wrote, "Please

put me back in the water. I am Paddle-to-the-Sea." Then he set the Paddle Person afloat in the spring freshets. The Paddle Person traveled far and was often grounded, but someone or some force always set him afloat again. The story is a kind of juvenile *Kon-Tiki*, with the Paddle Person journeying all the way to France and back. The illustrations in full color have a wild beauty that is unforgettable. Children literally wear this book out with rereadings.

*Tree in the Trail*, excellent for use in studying our westward movement, is the favorite of many children. It tells the story of what happened under and around one tree that stood on the trail westward. It begins when only Indians roamed that country, hunting the buffalo and making war on each other. It carries the history of the white man's invasion of the country to the time when the first long wagon train made its painful way over Raton Pass, and Santa Fe became a



*Real experiences and book experiences provide young artists with subjects for illustration. The first crayon drawing gives a vivid impression of an Amish farm; the second is convincing proof that the young artist has understood and enjoyed his reading about westward expansion. Superior School; principal, Miss Wilda Bayes.*

Illustrations by children in the East Cleveland Public Schools

colorful settlement. Anthropology, history, geography, and lively imagination make this a notable book.

The large colored illustrations of each book are strikingly dramatic, and the marginal drawings by Lucille Holling, the author's wife, carry a wealth of informational details which add greatly to the values of these books.

### Genevieve Foster

#### George Washington's World

Another notable writer with an original approach to history is Genevieve Foster. Her three books—*George Washington's World*, *Abraham Lincoln's World*, and *Augustus Caesar's World*—take a horizontal view of life around the world at the different periods of each man's life: birth, childhood, youth, maturity, and death. The idea grew, she tells us, when in the course of the usual vertical study of history she was always wondering what was happening in other parts of the world at the same time. The cross-section view of history was given further impetus when her young daughter noted that the characters in the movie version of *Catherine the Great* wore clothes similar to those of our colonial

period. "Did this Queen live at the same time as George Washington?" she asked her mother.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Foster did not know, but presently started her fascinating round-the-world charts of history, from which the books grew. What, for instance, was happening in France, England, and China when Washington was born, when he was in the midst of our Revolution, when he was President?

In this world's-eye view of various periods children see trends develop and then disappear, world-shaking men emerge and vanish, leaving behind them ruin or a better world. The effect is curiously impressive. And these books are fascinating to read. They leave children with a rounded sense of a period seldom to be found in a textbook. Mrs. Foster makes great leaders in other countries alive and memorable. Only an author-artist with a remarkable sense of design could integrate her text and illustrations as Mrs. Foster does. Both show a superlative sense of composition. Recognition of her World books and her Initial Biographies has been on an international

<sup>1</sup>Sara Innis Fenwick, "Exploring History with Genevieve Foster," *Elementary English*, October 1934.

scale. They have been widely translated because of their interpretation of our country and their contribution to better world understanding.

**Roger Duvoisin**  
**And There Was America**  
**Frances Cavanah**  
**Our Country's Story**

Roger Duvoisin celebrated the year of his naturalization by writing a most amusing little book called *And There Was America*. The theme of it is that Columbus started out to find China "and there was America!" Ponce de León started out to find the Fountain of Youth "and there was America!" These brief, dramatic little sketches of well-known explorers begin with Leif Ericson and end with the Pilgrims. Mr. Duvoisin's bright pictures add much to the charm of the book.

An altogether stirring and delightful in-

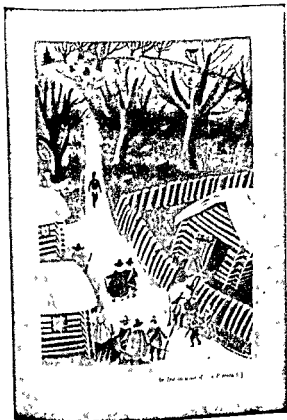


Illustration by William Pène du Bois for  
*In France* by Marguerite Clement, Viking, 1956  
 (book 5½ x 8½)

*William Pène du Bois illustrates this discussion of France with line drawings of the scenes and people he knows well. Here his precise and realistic sketch outlines a busy painter.*

From Roger Duvoisin's *And There Was America*, Knopf, 1938  
 (original in color, book 5½ x 8½)

*Throughout this book, Duvoisin uses a technique reminiscent of the children's. There are round poster trees or fingerlike trees, conventionalized waves, and perspective barely suggested—here one house tips precariously. Both color and composition are remarkable. The central figure of the Indian, marching portentously into the town, looms as large in the picture as he must have appeared to the eyes of the colonists.*



## The Dutch BUY AN ISLAND

Several years later some Dutch colonists bought the island of Manhattan from the Indians.

"We'll pay for it with these bright beads, shiny knives, and beautiful red cloth," they said.

These things had cost only about \$24.00, but at that time Manhattan was not worth much money.

The Indians' eyes sparkled.

"Ugh! We sell," they grunted.

The Dutch built houses with steep roofs like the houses in which they had lived in Holland. Red and yellow tulips bloomed in every yard. As the children played in the creaking streets, their shoes went clatter-clatter on the cobblestones.

Some of the Dutch fathers bought furs from the Indians. The furs were loaded on ships and carried across the ocean to be sold in Holland. Then the ships came back, bringing dishes and furniture and new clothes for the colonists.

The Dutch called their little town New Amsterdam. Later the English changed the name to New York. It became the biggest city in America.



Illustration by Janice Holland for *Our Country's Story* by Frances Cavanah, Rand McNally, 1945 (original in color, book 7½ x 10½)

*Gay illustrations surrounding the printed matter make a good bait to reading. Picture and text bring New Amsterdam to life for children.*

roduction to the history of the United States is Frances Cavanah's *Our Country's Story*. For children eight to ten it gives brief glimpses of Pilgrims and Dutch settlers; such leaders as Paul Revere, Washington, Boone, and Lincoln; such events as the Revolution and the Civil War; such movements as Westward Expansion; such inventions as trains and airplanes; and it climaxes with the idea of people learning to live together. The text is vigorous and authentic, the pictures unusually beautiful. The ideals of our democracy are shown growing slowly and steadily through people's movements and the national struggle for survival.

### Other peoples

There are many studies of different peoples now available. England, for instance, is represented by a new edition of that outstanding book, *The Story of English Life* by Amabel Williams-Ellis and F. J. Fisher. The book is too solid reading for the average twelve-year old, but he can use it for special reference. There are, for example, brief biographies of such people as Alfred the Great, William the Conqueror, Queen Elizabeth I, and other historical figures down to modern times.

Marguerite Clément's *In France* is a distinguished account of the history and people



of that country, about which there has been so little usable material. She takes a special look at modern French children. The enchanting illustrations are by William Pène du Bois, who so thoroughly enjoyed his own boyhood in France.

May McNeer's *The Mexican Story* is useful for a quick reference, but the narrative lacks continuity. There are brief accounts of outstanding people in Mexican history from early times down to the present day. Although the text plays down the terrors in early Mexican history, Lynd Ward's superb pictures bring out the violence of that long struggle and the

strength and patient endurance of the people.

There are equally good books about Switzerland, India, Holland, and many other countries. There is a useful series about various tribes of our American Indians by Sonia Bleeker, an anthropologist. Elizabeth Baity's *America Before Man* and *Americans Before Columbus* carry children into our far distant past with compelling and authentic accounts of those times. So with these well-written, authentic, and beautifully illustrated books teachers can enliven and enrich the textbooks, and parents will find they can enjoy and respect their children's reading.

## Religious books for children

The early books of religious instruction discussed in Chapter 3 were obviously intended to scare children into good behavior by threatening them with the imminence of an early death and the dire punishments visited on the wicked forever and ever. Today we are witnessing a remarkable flowering of children's religious books, of such cheerful implications and heart-moving beauty that children reading them feel comforted and strengthened. Old Testament stories with colorful illustrations, authentic and dramatic, make such heroes as Moses, Joseph, and David seem like real people. The different stories of the life of Jesus, with tenderly interpretative pictures for younger children and superb reproductions of the great masters for the older ones, re-create and make visually memorable the great episodes in that life. Prayers, religious instruction, religious reference books, and modern translations of religious literature of other countries are all available for children today.

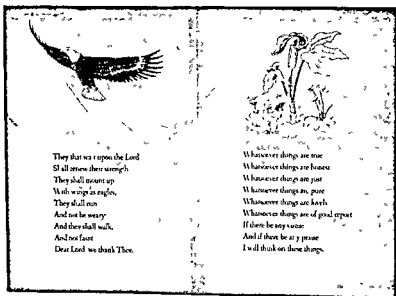
It is important that both teachers and parents know this field of religious literature—teachers because they are often asked for lists of such books, and parents because they will wish to use the best ones in the home. Some schools are not allowed to make any use of religious books, lest the classroom take on

a narrowly sectarian bias of one kind or another. Others are permitted wide latitude in this field. Teachers will need to respect the customs and attitudes of their community.

### Books of prayers

There are a number of prayer books for children, and they range from mediocre to excellent. The illustrations for these books often seem to have an overliteralness and oversweetness that curtail their imaginative appeal. Even for very small children "Give us this day our daily bread" need not be limited to the tight literalness of one fat loaf of white bread, and praying children need not be so plumply cute or ethereally sweet as some of the illustrators have made them. As a matter of fact, some of the illustrations of prayers seem adult reminiscences of childhood, *about* but not *for* children. But there are several small books of prayers which can be recommended both for their selections and their pictures.

Tasha Tudor has created some of her loveliest water colors for her *First Prayers*. The collection includes well-known prayers and some less familiar. The twenty-third Psalm is there, and the words of several hymns, all designed to give a child a reassuring sense of God's nearness and care.



They that wait upon the Lord  
Shall renew their strength;  
They shall mount up  
With wings as eagles,  
They shall run,  
And not be weary;  
And they shall walk,  
And not faint.  
Dear Lord, we thank Thee.

Whatsoever things are true,  
Whatsoever things are honest,  
Whatsoever things are just,  
Whatsoever things are pure,  
Whatsoever things are lovely,  
Whatsoever things are of good report;  
If there be any virtue,  
And if there be any praise,  
I will think on these things.

Illustration by Maud and Miska Petersham for *A Little Book of Prayers* by Emilie Fendall Johnson, Viking, 1941 (original in two colors, book 4 1/2 x 6 1/4)

*Suggestive rather than literal, these small decorative pictures aid rather than restrict the imagination. Eye and spirit lift with the soaring eagle. The mind begins thinking of other things that are lovely besides the flowers.*

Small as the book is, the pictures have a breath-taking loveliness and dignity that lift the spirit.

One particularly fine book is called *A Little Book of Prayers*. The text was prepared by Emilie E. Johnson, and the illustrations were done by Maud and Miska Petersham. The rhymed prayers in the first part are mediocre, but the second part of the book with its selections from the Bible contains as perfect a group of prayer verses as you could find for a three- or four-year-old. The pages, bordered in blue and decorated by the Petershams, are beautiful and suggestive rather than literal (see picture above). A picture of a soaring eagle lifts the eye even as the spirit is lifted with:

They that wait upon the Lord  
Shall renew their strength;  
They shall mount up  
With wings as eagles;  
They shall run,  
And not be weary;  
And they shall walk,  
And not faint.  
Dear Lord, we thank Thee.

A decoration of flowers carries beneath it:

Whatsoever things are true,  
Whatsoever things are honest,  
Whatsoever things are just,

Whatsoever things are pure,  
Whatsoever things are lovely,  
Whatsoever things are of good report;  
If there be any virtue,  
And if there be any praise,  
I will think on these things.

Such selections give both guidance and reassurance.

The pictures for Elizabeth Orton Jones' *Small Rain* are more childlike and illuminating than her pictures for *Prayer for a Child*, a Caldecott winner. *Small Rain* contains a well-selected group of Bible verses. It is illustrated with pictures of children's activities which interpret the verses in terms of the child's understanding without being too tightly literal. A small pajama-clad boy gazing at myriads of stars is the illustration for

The Heavens declare the glory of God;  
And the firmament sheweth his handywork.

There is no escaping the implications of the large picture which portrays children of different races and colors playing together. Their happy companionship is interpreted with the single line

All of you are children of the most High.

Engaging twins, pigtailed and bespectacled, run through the pictures, playing as hard

and having as much fun as the other children. Individual as well as racial differences are unobtrusively and cheerfully suggested. These same smiling children playing in a lusty rhythm band show us just how we should

Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness:

Come before his presence with singing.

And the book closes with a picture of a child tucked in bed, stars whirling round him, and the comforting line,

... and underneath are the everlasting arms.

Poring over the illustrations, children will learn the verses which will be theirs forever in happy association with the tender, merry pictures.

Elizabeth Orton Jones has also made some exquisite pictures for Eleanor Farjeon's *A Prayer for Little Things*. Pictures of fledglings, drops of rain, colts, and children make this a beautiful book which expands rather than limits the imagination.

The same imaginative beauty is found in her interpretation of St. Francis' *Canticle of the Sun*. A small boy wanders through the pictures, and the little birds, beasts, and flowers she has woven into her decorations are in themselves a hymn of praise. Read her *How Far Is It to Bethlehem?* and you will sense the deeply religious and warmly giving nature of the artist herself. It is the moving account of a Christmas play given by the crippled and speechless children in a rehabilitation center.

### The Bible

The Bible as a book for children offers certain obvious problems which we worry over, perhaps unnecessarily. Our real worry should be over modern children's and young people's ignorance of Bible literature. Today large numbers of college students are not sure who Moses was or what he did, know Joseph only as a modern novel (if at all), and have encountered Paul chiefly as a popular name for churches. It is surely time for

us to stop worrying about the implications of some of the Bible stories or about the facts of life to be found in the Bible, and to try once more to make Bible readers of our children.

Time was when children heard the Bible read aloud in the family circle and could never thereafter hear the story of the prodigal son without recalling the deep overtones of Father's voice. Children memorized the Psalms and the Beatitudes and recited them for Mother's final approval before standing up in the Sunday school and holding forth in oratorical solitude. Now Bible language and Bible stories are unfamiliar. Parents, too, baffled by questions of theology and unversed in Bible literature, are unprepared to give the stories to their children. This is a pity, not only because the Bible is a book to grow on and rediscover at different stages of our lives, but also because it contains the most civilized code of morals in existence, couched in memorable words. Lincoln's much-quoted style grew out of his complete familiarity with the Bible. Three young men, marooned on a raft without food, water, or books, saved their sanity and kept up their courage by recalling and retelling Bible stories.<sup>1</sup> The Old Testament tales, the Book of Psalms, and the dramatic sequence of the New Testament are not only great literature, but they have the power to widen our vision and renew our strength. Can we afford to let children grow up without knowing this book just because our theology is confused or skeptical? Believe or reject whatever you wish theologically, the Bible still remains a source of strength and wisdom, if children know it well enough to turn back to it and search its richness.

To get a clearer understanding of the ideas in the Bible, adults may well use a modern translation which will help overcome the obscurities of language and emphasize ideas and meanings. One of the best books for this purpose is the inexpensive and

<sup>1</sup>Robert Trumbull, *The Raft*.

understandable *The Bible: An American Translation* by J. M. Powis Smith and Edgar Goodspeed. This is an adult source with small but clear print. There is a juvenile edition of selections from it called *The Junior Bible*, which is edited by Mr. Goodspeed and printed in large, clear type with modern sentence and paragraph structure. There is also the *Revised Standard Version of the Bible*, which is widely used today in churches and church schools. It is an authorized revision made by thirty-two outstanding Biblical scholars.

Because the King James translation has great beauty and deep associative values, many people will want to know it and possess their own copy of it. For the six- to ten-year-olds *A First Bible* is an excellent edition superbly illustrated by Helen Sewell. It is briefer than the Goodspeed *Junior Bible*, but it does contain the main episodes in the life of Jesus and a fair selection of the important stories from the Old Testament. Helen Sewell's illustrations, in black and white, seem almost three-dimensional in

their depth and sculptured quality and they carry something of the austere grandeur of the text. Such interpretations, true to the spirit of the text and strikingly beautiful in themselves, make memorable to the small child the stories of Daniel in the Lion's Den, Ruth and Naomi, the Prodigal Son, the Childhood of Jesus, and other favorites. This book is a valuable acquisition to a child's library. The bibliography for this chapter lists several other editions of both the Old and New Testaments for older children.

Excellent contributions to Bible literature have been made by Maud and Miska Peter-sham. They have lavished some of their best illustrations on these books for younger children: *Stories from the Old Testament*, *Jesus' Story*, and the briefer story of the Nativity called *The Christ Child*. The three books, illustrated with painstaking authenticity, have a moving beauty and a childlike grace. The pictures of Joseph in the pit, the death of Moses, the young shepherd boy David, the Nativity, and the flight into Egypt are dramatic and tender and add reality to the text. These three beautiful books should make Bible readers of young children.

### Religious instruction

Mary Alice Jones has done a long series of books of religious instruction for young children, beginning with *Tell Me about God* and *Tell Me about Jesus*. Some parents like these books and use them gratefully. Others feel that the primer-like language completely destroys the majesty of the ideas, and that if the ideas are too difficult for young children they should not be introduced until later. A pedestrian text will induce



Illustration by Helen Sewell for *A First Bible*, Oxford, 1934 (book 7¼ x 11)

*Almost three-dimensional in their sculptured roundness, Helen Sewell's illustrations for A First Bible have impressive strength.*



Illustration by Elizabeth Orton Jones for *Small Rain*, Viking, 1944 (original in color, book 10 x 8 3/4)

*Elizabeth Orton Jones engagingly illustrates a Bible verse. See page 568.*

neither wonder nor reverence. Bright, large pictures have made these books exceedingly popular. You must decide for yourself whether or not you wish to use them.

Miss Jones' *The Bible Story of Creation* is unusually well done:

Historians and scientists know this old story does not answer all their questions about the beginnings. But many of the wisest have found, as perhaps you will find, that it answers the most important question of all.

In the beginning! The very beginning! What was there? Who was there?

Then she develops the idea of God's thought—"God was there. God was mind and purpose and power and love, planning a good world"—until it climaxes in man, "who could learn to think God's thoughts after him."

The superb words of the old Bible poem, the strong, simple text of Miss Jones' explanation, together with the decorative and joyful illustrations by Janice Holland, make

this book a "must" for many young children.

In the instructional field, each of us will have to make a selection based upon our own religious background and present beliefs and upon those of the children in our group. The bibliography for this chapter lists some introductions for young children to Jewish customs and ceremonies. There is an outstanding collection of the lives of the Saints for Catholic children. A story about Jesus and his ministry told from the standpoint of a little boy, *Nathan, Boy of Capernaum*, by Amy Lillie, is especially liked by Protestants.

Happily, we have also the first real attempt to provide young children with a feeling of the beauty and likeness in dissimilar religious practices—Florence Mary Fitch's *One God: The Ways We Worship Him*, which has been



Illustration from Tasha Tudor's *First Prayers*, Oxford, 1952 (book 3 1/4 x 5 1/4, picture 3 x 3 1/4)

*This, illustrating "For Those We Love," shows that the tenderness of Tasha Tudor's style, her light, soft lines and pleasant faces, lend themselves to such subject matter.*

approved by each of the three great religious bodies. Appealing photographs and a clear forthright text bring "The Jewish Way," "The Catholic Way," and "The Protestant Way" to children's attention. This clear, sympathetic interpretation of different religious beliefs can do much to give children respect for their neighbor's pattern of worship. This is a book of tremendous significance in our American way of life. Teachers and parents as well as the children should know it. It should be in every school for ready reference whenever religious holidays and ceremonies or beliefs and customs of different faiths are under discussion.

*The Tree of Life* is a distinguished text for a comparative study of religious ideas. It is a compilation of the "testaments of beauty and faith from many lands." Excerpts from the expressions of religious ideals of the Navaho Indians, the Norse, Hindu, Buddhist, Confucian, and other religions including the Hebrew and Christian, make up the content of the book. These bear impressive witness to the universality of faith. The book is for adolescents and adults and is impressive both in its format and content.

We seem at last to be upon a wave of fine and varied books for children of different ages—books imparting religious concepts without dogma, editing or retelling Bible literature, and illuminated by authentic and memorable illustrations. The spirit of these books emphasizes the points of agreement in all religion. Regardless of what faith or form of orthodoxy or unorthodoxy you may belong to, you should know these religious books. Teachers should acquaint themselves with this new literature, and parents not only should examine it but should use it with their children. Choose from among these new books those with which a child can begin exploring religious ideas. Teach him some of the great hymns whose words will stand the test of our modern search for meaning. Give him simple, honest little prayers and verses of supplication, building toward the great prayers gradually. Tell him stories of the Old Testament heroes who grew slowly in their knowledge of God and in the practice of His laws. Tell the child stories of the Saints or episodes from the New Testament until he can read them for himself. Say over with him verses from the Psalms or whole Psalms which he can understand and learn with you. Thanksgiving is above all times the natural occasion for introducing the Psalms both in the home and in the school. These interpret as no other literature in the world has done man's heartfelt gratitude to God for the blessings of life, and the eternal yearnings of the human spirit for goodness. Give a child the Psalms for spiritual reinforcement, because they will steady him when he needs to be steadied,

comfort him when he needs comfort, and they will bring him a renewal and refreshment of life through communion with God.

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Among the modern books for children we find not only poetry, fiction, and biography, but factual books to encourage his hobbies and sound reference books, from junior dictionaries and encyclopedias to books on birds or reptiles or aviation or chemistry. Whatever the child's special needs may be, there are books to meet them—honest, dependable books, sensibly written and well organized. We should help children to dis-

cover these and to learn how to use them. Then, because "man does not live by bread alone," we should also help him to find those modern books which will feed his growing spirit—religious books without threats or prejudice. Today, children are born into a world in which no one can guarantee them any material security, but in which we can still offer them those great concepts which have enabled men to walk through troubles and dangers upright and unafraid. "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>II Timothy 1:7.

## Illustrative selections

*The first two selections (pages 574-577) are representative of the fine biographies available for young people. The third and fourth*

*selections (577-580) are from excellent informational books for two different age levels— young children, and older children and adults.*

### Night of Fear<sup>1</sup>

THE nights and days that followed were long and sleepless. The surviving settlers did not know when or where the raiding British would strike again. They also knew but little of the war raging the length of the land.

Only occasional couriers, riding South, riding North, swept past on their foam-flecked horses bringing week-old news. From them they learned that in the North, men like themselves were doggedly fighting behind stone fences, across river and forest, the same good fight. The people of the Waxhaws, however, were not all of one mind about the American Revolution. Loyalty to the king was a sentiment still rooted in many minds. There were Highlanders who felt religiously loyal to the biblical text, "Fear God and honor the king." The Moravians and Quakers were sects that conscientiously opposed war on any ground whatsoever. The Catholic Irish were about equally divided in their feelings. Only the Scotch-Irish were consistently fervent patriots in the cause of the new land.

Consequently, along with the fear and menace of the British, there was a feeling of civil war developing in the community. Neighbors were warring against neighbors. Sudden night raids,

fierce pursuits, murder from ambush on the woodland trails became everyday occurrences. There was not a moment of serenity.

The paths were clipped close with the pounding feet of horses galloping from cabin to cabin to bring warnings and news. When men met anywhere the first question was, "Which side do you favor?" The answer was a hand-shake or a bullet.

Andy stayed close to home during the first two weeks. His uncle was regaining his strength, but was still unable to walk. All the labor of the farm devolved upon Andy. Active and tireless he worked without a whimper of complaint. On the 15th of March he had turned thirteen, but the realities of the war and his new responsibilities made him seem years older.

There was still no sign of Mrs. Jackson. If it had not been for his uncle, Andy would have started out in search of his mother. But with bands of Tories and British soldiers roaming the country nightly he knew he must wait. It was lucky that he took his responsibilities seriously, for on the night of June 3rd, shortly after dark, there was a knock on the lonely cabin door.

Andy reached for the rifle and whispered something to his aunt. There was no light in the room as the settlers had been warned that lights at night attracted the attention of raiders. The knocks were repeated.

<sup>1</sup>From *Young Hickory, a Story of the Frontier Boyhood and Youth of Andrew Jackson*, by Stanley Young. Copyright 1940 by Stanley Young and reprinted by permission of Rinehart & Company, Inc., Publishers.



"Open up, rebels!" an arrogant voice outside commanded.

There was no doubt about it—the dreaded British who had dragged so many settlers from their beds and murdered them in the night were now upon them. Andy concealed himself in one corner of the room opposite the door.

"Go to the door, Aunt Crawford, and don't let them in unless they threaten to break it down," Andy whispered.

Aunt Crawford pulled back the square peephole in the door.

"I don't know who you are," she said calmly enough, though her knees were shaking for fear her husband would waken in the next room, "but I certainly will not let you in at this hour."

There was a rough, impatient laugh outside.

"Bring the axes, men," the voice said.

The axes began to fall on the thick door. Andy stepped over to his aunt. His voice was admirably steady and he noticed that he felt more determined than afraid, now the emergency was here.

"Open the door, Aunt Crawford," he said.

Aunt Crawford obeyed him unquestioningly. There was a crisp command and assurance in his voice. She stepped to the door and pulled the bar as Andy crouched back in the shadows and leveled his gun.

When the British officer's shadow loomed in the opening, Andy fired point-blank. The man fell back. There was a cry of pain mixed with rage and astonishment. Andy picked up his uncle's gun and fired again out into the blackness. He heard the retreating footsteps, then voices.

"There's a nest of them in there, I warrant," he heard someone say.

And then another voice, farther away, asked, "Are you much wounded, captain?"

"Badly," a weaker voice said.

There was a groan as the men hoisted their captain into the saddle, then the only sound was the echo of hooves riding away.

So deliberately and yet so promptly had Andy acted that the raiders had been panic-stricken. The darkness had also quickened their imagination. They fled, and although Andy waited the entire night for their return, they did not come back.

After they were gone Andy felt suddenly weak and tremulous. He became genuinely frightened and flopped down on the floor in

front of the fireplace. But after a few moments his courage returned and with it was born a great confidence. He had met his first enemy in battle and had been victorious. He had acted on his own impulses and they had been right.

"Andy," his Aunt Crawford asked him the next day, "what would you have done if they had shot back?"

"I don't know," Andy said. "I just figured somehow that they wouldn't."

His aunt smiled at him proudly and placed two more flapjacks on his empty plate. Uncle Crawford looked at the boy as if he were seeing him for the first time.

Andy's moment of triumph was short-lived. It was etched in his memory forever, but it fell quickly away from his conscious life the following afternoon when Mrs. Jackson, shortly before dusk, came home.

The boy saw her coming half a mile away and ran the whole distance to meet her. Blackie was there, and Robert, and Andy's heart lifted until his mother kissed him. Then he knew something had happened—she hugged him too long and too hard. Elizabeth Jackson, for all her tenderness and affection, was not the close-hugging kind. Some reserve in her Scotch Presbyterian upbringing always came between her and an outward demonstration of her love. But now her arms clung to him like a vise that could not let go.

"Andy. Andy boy!" she said.

"Did you find Hugh, Mother?" Andy asked quickly.

Robert was looking straight ahead. Mrs. Jackson took a long time to answer.

"Aye," she said.

For the first time Andy noted how pale she was and the gray wisps of hair curling out from under her bonnet. He did not remember his mother with any gray in her hair. Mrs. Jackson took his hand.

"Hugh is dead, Andy," she said. "He died after the battle at Stono Ferry."

Andy clutched his mother's hand. The tears welled out of his thin face like water out of a spring long waiting to find the air. He could not hold them back, but he made no sound. His mother saw his tears and Robert saw them. They began to weep, silently, in the same tight way.

The two boys and their mother walked up the hill together, the ponies trailing behind

them. The mother had an arm locked around each boy and she measured her steps with theirs. The sun spilled its last golden light on the path before them.

## Buckhorn Valley—Nancy Hanks, The Pioneer Sacrifice<sup>1</sup>

DURING the year 1817, little Abe Lincoln, eight years old, going on nine, had an ax put in his hands and helped his father cut down trees and notch logs for the corners of their new cabin, forty yards from the pole-shed where the family was cooking, eating, and sleeping.

Wild turkey, ruffed grouse, partridge, coon, rabbit, were to be had for the shooting of them. Before each shot Tom Lincoln took a rifle-ball out of a bag and held the ball in his left hand; then with his right hand holding the gun-powder horn he pulled the stopper with his teeth, slipped the powder into the barrel, followed with the ball; then he rammed the charge down the barrel with a hickory ramrod held in both hands, looked to his trigger, flint, and feather in the touch-hole—and he was ready to shoot—to kill for the home skillet.

Having loaded his rifle just that way several thousand times in his life, he could do it in the dark or with his eyes shut. Once Abe took the gun as a flock of wild turkeys came toward the new log cabin, and, standing inside, shot through a crack and killed one of the big birds; and after that, somehow, he never felt like pulling the trigger on game-birds. A mile from the cabin was a salt lick where deer came; there the boy could have easily shot the animals, as they stood rubbing their tongues along the salty slabs or tasting of a saltish ooze. His father did the shooting; the deer killed gave them meat for Nancy's skillet; and the skins were tanned, cut, and stitched into shirts, trousers, mitts, moccasins. They wore buckskin; their valley was called the Buckhorn Valley.

After months the cabin stood up, four walls fitted together with a roof, a one-room house eighteen feet square, for a family to live in. A stuck chimney plastered with clay ran up outside. The floor was packed and smoothed dirt. A log-fire lighted the inside, no windows were cut in the walls. For a door there was a hole cut to stoop through. Bedsteads were cleated to

the corners of the cabin; pegs stuck in the side of a wall made a ladder for young Abe to climb up in a loft to sleep on a hump of dry leaves; rain and snow came through chinks of the roof onto his bearskin cover. A table and three-legged stools had the top sides smoothed with an ax, and the bark-side under, in the style called "puncheon."

A few days of this year in which the cabin was building, Nancy told Abe to wash his face and hands extra clean; she combed his hair, held his face between her two hands, smacked him a kiss on the mouth, and sent him to school—nine miles and back—Abe and Sally hand in hand hiking eighteen miles a day. Tom Lincoln used to say Abe was going to have "a real eddication," explaining, "You air a-go'in' to larn readin', writin', and cipherin'."

He learned to spell words he didn't know the meaning of, spelling the words before he used them in sentences. In a list of "words of eight syllables accented upon the sixth," was the word "incomprehensibility." He learned that first, and then such sentences as "Is he to go in?" and "Ann can spin flax."

Some neighbors said, "It's a pore make-out of a school," and Tom complained it was a waste of time to send the children nine miles just to sit with a lot of other children and read out loud all day in a "blab" school. But Nancy, as she cleaned Abe's ears in corners where he forgot to clean them, and as she combed out the tangles in his coarse, sandy black hair, used to say, "Abe, you go to school now, and larn all you kin." And he kissed her and said, "Yes, Mammy," and started with his sister on the nine-mile walk through timberland where bear, deer, coon, and wildcats ran wild.

Fall time came with its early frost and they were moved into the new cabin, when horses and a wagon came breaking into the clearing one day. It was Tom and Betsy Sparrow and their seventeen-year-old boy, Dennis Hanks, who had come from Hodgenville, Kentucky, to cook and sleep in the pole-shed of the Lincoln family till they could locate land and settle. Hardly a year had passed, however, when both Tom and Betsy Sparrow were taken down with the "milk sick," beginning with a whitish coat on the tongue. Both died and were buried in October on a little hill in a clearing in the timbers near by.

<sup>1</sup>From *Abe Lincoln Grows Up* by Carl Sandburg, copyright, 1926, 1928, by Harcourt, Brace and Company, Inc.

Soon after, there came to Nancy Hanks Lincoln that white coating of the tongue, her vitals burned; the tongue turned brownish; her feet and hands grew cold and colder, her pulse slow and slower. She knew she was dying, called for her children, and spoke to them her last choking words. Sarah and Abe leaned over the bed. A bony hand of the struggling mother went out, putting its fingers into the boy's sandy black hair; her fluttering guttural words seemed to say he must grow up and be good to his sister and father.

So, on a bed of poles cleated to the corner of the cabin, the body of Nancy Hanks Lincoln lay, looking tired . . . tired . . . with a peace settling in the pinched corners of the sweet, weary mouth, silence slowly etching away the lines of pain and hunger drawn around the gray eyes where now the eyelids closed down in the fine pathos of unbroken rest, a sleep without interruption settling about the form of the stooped and wasted shoulder-bones, looking to the children who tiptoed in, stood still, cried their tears of want and longing, whispered "Mammy, Mammy," and heard only their own whispers answering, looking to these little ones of her brood as though new secrets had come to her in place of the old secrets given up with the breath of life.

And Tom Lincoln took a log left over from the building of the cabin, and he and Dennis Hanks whipsawed the log into planks, planed the planks smooth, and made them of a measure for a box to bury the dead wife and mother in. Little Abe, with a jackknife, whittled pine-wood pegs. And then, while Dennis and Abe held the planks, Tom bored holes and stuck the whittled pegs through the bored holes. This was the coffin, and they carried it the next day to the same little timber clearing near by, where a few weeks before they had buried Tom and Betsy Sparrow. It was in the way of the deer-run leading to the saltish water; light feet and shy hoofs ran over those early winter graves.

So the woman, Nancy Hanks, died, thirty-six years old, a pioneer sacrifice, with memories of monotonous, endless everyday chores, of mystic Bible verses read over and over for their promises, and with memories of blue wistful hills and a summer when the crab-apple blossoms flamed white and she carried a boy-child into the world.

She had looked out on fields of blue-blos-

soming flax and hummed "Hey, Betty Martin, tiptoe, tiptoe"; she had sung of bright kingdoms by and by and seen the early frost leaf its crystals on the stalks of buttonweed and redbud; she had sung:

You may bury me in the east,  
You may bury me in the west,  
And we'll all rise together in that morning.

## The Garter Snake's Family<sup>1</sup>

A GARTER snake lived in a grassy place near a river. She liked the river bank and the fields beyond, because there were frogs and mice here. And she liked to eat these animals just about as much as people like to eat fried chicken and fish and other such food.

The garter snake had many relatives living in this neighborhood, but she paid very little attention to them. In fact, she hardly ever noticed them. She just went on about her own business of finding things to eat, and of keeping other, bigger animals from doing her any harm.

She had two serious things to do in the summer besides eating. The first was that she had to shed her old skin, which she had worn all winter, so that the nice new skin she had grown underneath could be seen. She waited until her old skin felt dry and loose and began to split at her mouth. Then she scraped herself along the ground, pushing the loose skin backward. It came off something like a stocking that you pull inside out. When this was done, she looked very fresh and gay in her new green skin, and went around having a good time.

Her life was easy and carefree for some time. And then her second serious work began. One warm day in the middle of the summer forty small children snakes were born to her. This, of course, is quite a family and she had a lot to do to look after them. All the small snakes were born on the same day, as twins are for people. But it did not surprise her that she should have so very many children because garter snakes always have large families. Sometimes they have only ten or twelve, but mostly they have more.

### THEN SHE HAD FORTY CHILDREN TO LOOK AFTER

Just after the little snakes were born, the mother garter snake said to them in her snake

<sup>1</sup>From *Hop, Skip, and Fly* by Irmengarde Eberle. By permission of Holiday House, Inc.

language, which is without words or sounds of any kind, "My children, you can see that I cannot possibly find food for all forty of you, and for myself, too. And besides, all snakes find their own food as soon as they are born. So don't be surprised if I don't do much of that kind of work for you. Watch me. Move quickly and noiselessly, and you will soon learn to catch your own food."

The forty little green snakes crawled around under the high grass, and their mother watched them and was pleased with them. "They are just like me," she said to herself. "They will get along well in the world."

She watched them pretty closely because they were so small, and could easily get lost. They were only six inches long, while she was about three feet long.

After a while one little snake went gliding away from the rest, slipping down the slope toward the river bank.

"Where are you going?" asked his mother, without making a sound.

"Oh, I am just going to look around and find out what this world is like," said the Small Snake.

"Well, don't be too bold before you know how to take care of yourself," said his mother.

"I'll be careful," said the Small Snake, and went on toward the river.

The mother snake called to her other children. "Come along. I'm going to have to look after your brother, and you'd better all stay with me. It's safer." As she went gliding along under the grass she suddenly smelled something most pleasant. She knew right away that it was a frog. She turned quickly and noiselessly, struck her open mouth at the small frog, and swallowed him whole.

The forty small snakes watched her, and then made up their minds it was about time they had a little lunch, too.

They went gliding off through the grass looking for something to eat.

#### A SMALL SNAKE LEARNS TO FEED HIMSELF

The Small Snake came out of the shadows of the tall grass and found himself upon a mud bank beside the river. He lay still in the bright, warm sunlight for a moment. "Ah," he thought, "if this is what life is like it is pretty fine."

He could not hear any sounds around him because, being a snake, he had no ears. But he

could smell very, very well. He could smell the grass and the river and the insects, and he could smell the frogs had been here a moment ago. He could feel more perfectly than people can too. He could feel the slightest stirring of the wind, the swaying of the grass behind him; he could feel the faint shaking of the earth made by the hoofs of a cow far off in the field. He could feel the flow of the river and the scrambling of a turtle on the bank. He could see the slightest motion of any plant or living animal. And he lay there in the sun feeling very happy about all these clear, quick abilities he had.

He let his tongue lick in and out, because it helped him feel more perfectly the life about him. As he lay there happy and interested, he felt the faint slide of a frog coming up out of the water; and then the soft thud as it hopped on the bank. Water plants were in the way so that he could not see the frog, but he was sure that it must be a very small one because it made such a faint thud. It must be just about large enough for a six-inch long snake to swallow. He slipped forward quickly and noiselessly, and in another second he had swallowed the small frog.

Just then his mother came up to him. She looked at the big bulge in his neck where the frog was. "Fine!" she said. "You are a smart young snake. You will get along well in the world. But come now. I have a feeling that it is far too long since I have eaten a field mouse. Let us go up into the dry field above the river where there are many mice."

The Small Snake thought he'd like to stay by the river and catch another frog. But his mother slipped away up the bank with all the other snake children close around her, and the Small Snake was afraid to be left alone, so he followed too.

#### SOMETHING ELSE TO LEARN

All that summer the young snakes often went off by themselves, but they never went so far away that they could not smell their mother, or feel the motion of her sliding green body along the ground. And whenever something frightened them they went quickly back to her. By autumn the small snakes were almost grown up. But still they stayed close to their mother most of the time.

As the weather grew cooler the Small Snake said to his mother one day, in his snake language which is without sound:

"I don't like the way the world is turning cold. Will it always be like this hereafter?"

"Oh, no," said the mother, licking her tongue in and out. "This cold simply means that winter is coming, and that it is time for us to go to bed and sleep for a few months."

"Then let's go to sleep now," said the Small Snake. "I don't like the cold."

"All right," said the mother snake. She moved around through the grass calling all her children to come to her. Then she went gliding up the bank until she found a rocky ledge. She crawled under this ledge, and curled herself up comfortably. All her children found themselves safe, comfortable places under the rock, too, and in a short time everybody was ready for sleep.

"Well," said their mother, "good-night, children. When I see you again next spring you will all be pretty well grown up, and then I won't have much to do with you any more. Don't be surprised if I forget all about you, then, because that's the way we snakes always act toward our families."

"We won't be surprised at anything," said the Small Snake. "We have lived for a whole summer now. And we know that almost anything can happen. The world is a most interesting place, indeed."

## The Garter Snake<sup>1</sup>

THE garter snakes are even more widely distributed through the United States than the bull and pine snakes. If no other snake finds its way into the small zoo, one or a dozen of these is certain to put in an appearance sooner or later.

In many parts of their range, garter snakes greatly outnumber snakes of other species. In some localities, such as the high mountain meadows of the Sierras, their number is almost unbelievable. Semi-aquatic in habit, the small snakes of this region frequent the borders of the shallow meadow ponds and, as the passer-by disturbs them, take to the water in such hordes that a small pond fairly boils with their agitated movements.

It is to be regretted that with their wide distribution and great numbers, the garter snakes should be of little economic value. They are powerless to do actual harm to man and cer-

tainly under some circumstances consume a share of destructive insects. But against this meager credit is a heavy debit for their inroads on the numbers of frogs and young toads, powerful natural agents in insect control, and a bill for the destruction of young game fish.

The kinship of the garter snakes and the water snakes is attested by the habit of both of voiding an offensive, acrid-smelling secretion when frightened. In captivity, after this preliminary unpleasantness and a little snappishness, they become gentle and cease to strike or otherwise offend.

The basic characteristic of most species of garter snakes is the three light stripes running the length of the body against a dark ground color. This may or may not be accompanied by spots along the sides; sometimes the side stripes are faint (in one species they are entirely absent). The ground color between the stripes may be solid or broken into bars or checkered patterns. The variations on the basic theme are seemingly infinite and have been for years the joy and despair of the classifiers.

Of our many species of garter snakes, the common garter snake, *Thamnophis sirtalis*, and its numerous subspecies have a nationwide distribution and a correspondingly wide range of color and pattern variation. In the East the ground color is ordinarily black, brown or olive and the stripes greenish, dusty yellow or yellow. Between the central stripe and those of the sides, a row of rather symmetrical squarish dark markings is present, although in the dark specimens it may not be obvious. The body of the snake is moderately stout and the head distinct from the neck. Young specimens are more slender and vivid in color. The scales of the back are lightly ridged. The common garter snake very rarely attains as much as three feet in length.

Among the more beautiful color phases of this species is a form from Florida with belly, chin and under-parts of the head bright and clean blue-green, black ground color of body and slightly green straw-colored stripings.

In several of the varieties of the common garter snake, the central stripe is stronger or different in color from those of the sides and the latter are sometimes obscure and ill-defined. In one subspecies, *Thamnophis sirtalis infernalis* of the Pacific coast, the side stripes are entirely absent in adults and from this characteristic the snake takes its usual name of one-striped

<sup>1</sup>From Chapter 9, "Snakes," in *Our Small Native Animals* by Robert Snedigar, copyright 1939 by Random House, Inc. Reprinted by permission of the publishers.

garter snake. *Infernalis* presumably relates to its erratic behavior and the impression it makes on man. Ditmars notes this behavior as being the distinctive character which sets it apart, in his mind, from related species. When disturbed, *infernalis* strikes viciously and, in an attempt to escape, throws its body into a series of sidewise loops, at the same time keeping a menacing head in the direction of the enemy. If the snake is trying to get up a steep and sandy ditch bank, the impression that it is about to attack is complete. Only one member of our family, an old tom cat by the unheroic name of Henry, did not fear these supposedly dangerous reptiles. He killed and ate them. We ascribed his eventual death in a fit to this morbid habit and diet.

The usual western garter snake belongs to another group, that of *Thamnophis ordinoides* and its numerous subspecies. It is like *sirtalis* in general form, color, pattern and the infinite number of variations upon them, but is smaller in size, and has generally duller colors.

Among the more distinct and less difficult of identification is Butler's garter snake of the Middle West, *Thamnophis butleri*. Stout of body, with a narrow head and neck, *butleri* is smaller than *sirtalis*, seldom running more than eighteen or twenty inches in length. In habit, *butleri* is very gentle, easy to feed, and although not particularly bright in color or beautiful in pattern, is an eminently suitable member of a mixed terrarium family. With toads large enough not to be tempting, a wood or box turtle and perhaps even a frog or two, several *butleri* help to make an attractive terrarium picture.

The care of garter snakes is simple. If frogs and small toads are available in sufficient quantities, the larger snakes will be better off for the balanced ration the whole food affords. While small toads are acceptable, larger specimens are not favored and often will be disgorged after having been swallowed. Presumably the greater development of the skin glands and the quantities of poison exuded are the unpleasant factors. Garter snakes of the less aquatic species relish earthworms and these, in addition to being the staple food for small individuals, offer a means of conditioning larger ones to an easily prepared and always available diet. The training is simple. Mix a few earthworms in with a small quantity of hamburger or other chopped meat and place in the cage in a shallow dish or on a piece of glass. The snakes, attracted by the wiggling and scent of the worms, attack the mass. Often one or two such meals are enough and thereafter the snakes are willing to dispense with the stimulus of the worm movement and scent and will take meat alone. Beef should not be fed entirely but should be alternated with chopped raw liver and fish. After the snakes have become well-conditioned to such diet, cod liver oil or the contents of a broken vitamin capsule may be added. Feed once weekly.

Cages for garter snakes should be airy and light. Plenty of clean dry hiding space under pieces of sheet moss and bark should be provided. As these snakes have a marked fondness for soaking, a shallow container of clean, fresh water must be provided. If possible, place the cage where sunlight will reach it for a part of each day, especially during the winter months.

**And still they read**



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Reading plus



Illustration from Robert McCloskey's  
*Homer Price*, Viking, 1943  
(book 6 x 8½)

*Robert McCloskey can turn a public monument, or a boy's bedroom, or a drugstore scene into something irresistibly funny. Here he spoofs the comics with satirical gusto.*

When the wisecracks suggest that our Johnnies and our Janeys can't read, it is time for someone to reply firmly, "But they can read and they do read—more books than any generation of children ever read before." Children's librarians can produce the statistics on book withdrawals to prove the point, and reading research specialists can vouch for children's reading skills, which means not word-reading, but reading for understanding and enjoyment. What then of those arch villains—the comics, television, radio, and moving pictures—which are supposed to have competed so successfully for the child's time that he can't possibly squeeze in any reading even if he wanted to?

There they are—the lively arts, and the child patronizes all of them. And why shouldn't he? They are of the times he lives in, and some of them are the wonder of our

age. Moreover, they are easy and for the most part require nothing of their young patrons but an unlimited ability to sit. But there are the books, too—books which he has drawn from the public or the school library or which fond relatives have bought for him, and which he reads and rereads with continued affection. As one little girl said, "I've read *Brighty* five times, and I'll probably read it again." She was not a particularly bookish child, and all the mass media of entertainment were available to her.

For children, it is not a matter of television or reading. It is, happily, reading plus, for over and over again television, radio, or a moving picture will send a child to the book source to find out more about the program or movie he has enjoyed or to savor it again in the slower process of reading.

Adults, then, need not be too fearful of the



usurpation of all reading time by these new media. But it is essential for grown-ups to know what the child is reading, seeing, and hearing. It is true that comics can be lurid, television or radio stories banal or sensational, and movies too lush. But books can be trashy, too. Part of the process of growing up is to learn to discriminate—in every field. Just as there are great books available in the juvenile field, so there are great programs to be found

## What about the comic books?

The most serious objections to any of the mass entertainment media have been leveled at the comics. And let's distinguish at once between the comic strips of the newspapers and the comic books which the child calls "comics." The comic strips are designed for family consumption. Dad and Junior, Mother and young Betty may follow favorite strips at breakfast time or in the Sunday papers. These may be dull or banal, romantic or fantastic, but they are generally censored sufficiently to be harmless.

The comic book, on the other hand, the child buys for himself and reads alone or in the company of other children. It is not subjected to the breakfast-table scrutiny of the family, and the self-censorship of the publishers is questionable, especially since they have discovered that crime, sex, and sadism pay off in a big way when they are used as the subject matter for children's inexpensive reading material. And how the comics must have paid! The statistics of 1954 note some three hundred such comic books published regularly.<sup>1</sup> Their sales have reached as high as ninety million copies a month.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, although many studies report that the number of comic books read tends to decrease with age and has declined perceptibly by the time a child reaches high school, there is a goodly percent of adult urban Americans

on radio and television, and in moving pictures. Whether there has ever been a masterpiece in the field of the comics may be debatable, but at least some comics are satirical and innocent bits of entertainment. In all leisure-time activities for children, careful parents and teachers are or should be keeping their eyes on the young consumer and aiding him in finding wholesome sources of enjoyment.

who are still regular readers of comic books.

"And why not?" ask the skeptics. "Why isn't reading a comic book a harmless way to kill time?" This brings us to the heart of the problem. Why shouldn't our children read the comics? What's the matter with them and what is all the fuss about?

### Easy to read

Like the primers and the three dollar picture-stories of the trade publishers, the comics use one of the oldest forms of communication—the picture symbol. But primers and picture-books are designed for the youngest, the non-readers or the beginning readers. Although the pictures carry the story, the words are there, too, associated with the pictures and telling a wholesome story. With the primers there is a sequential progression in the use of words, and in the normal course of learning to read the young child changes from a picture reader to a word reader. The eleven- or twelve-year-old child is reading books with only an occasional picture.

But in the comics, pictures continue from the cradle to senility. And what pictures—badly drawn, crudely colored, and poorly printed! The few words that accompany the pictures are often so blurred as to be barely legible. Any reputable textbook company zealously safeguards the eyesight of children, but the comic-book publishers as zealously disregard it. However, the comic-book storyteller gets along with the minimum number of words. No reading progress is needed here,

<sup>1</sup>Josette Frank, *Your Child's Reading Today*, p. 245. Doubleday, 1954.

<sup>2</sup>Fredric Wertham, M.D., "It's Still Murder," *The Saturday Review*, April 9, 1955, p. 12.



Illustration from Glen Rounds' *Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger*, Holiday House, 1936 (book 5½ x 7½, picture 4 x 3)

*The exploits of Paul Bunyan can match those of any comic-book superman, and they have the additional value of humor. Here Glen Rounds shows Ol' Paul helping a cloud pass his pile-driver.*

when pictures tell the story for the five-year-old and the fifty-five-year-old reader.

#### The case for the comic

Granting that the techniques of comic books make reading easy and probably, together with their cheapness and availability, account in large part for their popularity, what else can be said in their defense? Miss Josette Frank, long a member of the staff of the Child Study Association, has been perhaps the most insistent and the staunchest defender of these publications. It should, however, be borne in mind that she has also been for many years a member of the Advisory Editorial Board of National Comics Publications. In her book, *Your Child's Reading Today*, Chapter Eighteen is devoted to answering the question "What about the Comics?" and it is a vigorous defense of their harmlessness.

Research studies agree with Miss Frank's statement that comics are read by all sorts of children: bright and dull, good readers and poor, those from bookish and non-bookish homes. Obviously, no adult who wants to know what his child is up to can afford to ignore so widespread an influence.

Miss Frank credits the enormous popularity of comics first of all to the fact that they are easy reading, and most studies agree with her. Then she points out that they supply children with adventure stories, real and fan-

tastic, stories for every age group and for every area of interest from Indians, cowboys, and prehistoric cave dwellers to teen-age romance. She further notes that

*The comics offer dramatic expression of the basic emotions and even of the basic moralities; a child can express his aggressive impulses through his comics hero for the most admirable objectives. Villains are thoroughly villainous and heroes are unexceptionably noble. (p. 248)*

This is sound psychology if the "objectives" are also sound. Nor is the idea that the comics are the folktales of the modern age too far-fetched, with a galaxy of supermen for the modern giant-killers and conquest and achievement still strong motives and centers of interest.

Miss Frank candidly admits that there has been irresponsible publishing in this field as in others. Exploiting the public taste for sex and horror has proved profitable, or obviously it would not have developed on so fantastic a scale. But she emphasizes the fact that responsible publishers in consultation with education experts have ruled out "pictorial horror, bloody or battered figures, sadism, torture, and the ridicule of law-enforcement agencies." (p. 252) Such a statement seems to imply that these things had existed before the code was enacted.

Miss Frank is a responsible person who has devoted a lifetime of service to child study. That she does not "view with alarm" is heartening, but many others feel she is too sanguine. She has never, for instance, analyzed the content of the more lurid crime comics, nor does she ever face squarely the waste of

how-to-do-it crime books and salacious sex and sadistic stories are still obtainable, your child is not safe. He may buy the wholesome funnies of the Disney type, but most children look at other children's treasured comics. They swap, and they find out how to acquire second-hand bargains. In the process they obtain a surprisingly broad view of the field. It is not enough to know what your child is reading at home. Your scrutiny should include the neighborhood newsstands from which other children buy. We try to shield children from pornographic pictures, and our efforts should also cover the undesirables of the comics. Perhaps permanent committees of PTA members might include this as one of their activities.

Probably most people can think of a child or two who have gone through a temporary period of avid comic-book reading and survived, apparently undamaged. One boy could hardly get in or out of his bedroom for the two thousand comic books he had stored there. Yet when he graduated from grade school he spent thirty dollars given to him by fond relatives on books that would have brought smiles of approval to the faces of librarians and teachers. He was an honor student in high school and as amiable and forthright a boy as any family could hope for. But this boy came from an ideal home—happy, affectionate, prosperous, and with two wholesome outlets, music and sports. What about children from underprivileged homes, where lack of money is a constant worry and family rows are the rule rather than the exception? And what about children from city slums with more examples of drunkenness, drug addiction, violence, and immorality than of decency? What about the effects of crime comics on such children? If they can't protect themselves, don't we owe them such protection?

Schools can help. Teachers can ask the children to bring in their favorite comics. Perhaps they won't bring the worst of them, but if the discussions are kept free and in the children's hands, indications of these sub-

standard comics will creep in. Treat the children's books with respect, no matter how you may feel about them. Remember that in many homes these are the only books they have ever known an adult to buy. Praise the content of some of the better examples, and by way of these begin to set up criteria for judging them. If no lurid examples of crime, terror, sex, or sadism turn up, be thankful, but explore a little, too. If you can find the names of some, you might ask, "Have you ever seen any copies of ——— Comics? What did you think of them?" If there is a lively response, try again to develop standards, not through any moralistic pronouncements, but casually and unemotionally through the children themselves. "What do you think would be the effect of these on some weak boy or silly girl?" At the adolescent and even the pre-adolescent period, children can be almost as readily turned into young crusaders for decency as they can be made into young desperadoes.

Another thing the schools can do is to see that children of every reading age have ample easy reading experiences. The fun of reading can never be savored if the struggle to read is too difficult. Even good readers need periods of relaxed easy reading, when neither the words nor the content present any difficulties. Adults, too, indulge in this kind of reading—professors of Greek have been known to carry around whodunits. This is the rôle the comics have played with phenomenal success—providing easy reading materials, and teachers should not leave the comics unchallenged here. Constance Carr prepared a pamphlet, "Substitutes for the Comic Books,"<sup>1</sup> which is a bibliography designed to bridge the gap between comics and books. It might serve as a starting point, and teachers can readily add to this list. Children of every reading level should discover that reading can be easy and books can be fun. That is a first weapon for fighting the comic-book habit.

<sup>1</sup>Reprinted from *Elementary English*, April and May 1951.

## Television and radio

The comics used to be the chief whipping boy for all the non-readers in a family. Then radio was included in the blame, and now television has been raised to top place among the scapegoats. Radio has been dropped from the discussion, except where television is still not readily available. The reason is obvious. Ask any group of children what programs they listen to on the radio and, if the families own television sets, they answer promptly, "None!" or after heavy thought, "Well, we get the weather report every morning to see how to dress for school." In some cities they say, "We listen to the *Carnival of Books*, and we sure wish they'd televise that program. We want to see what the authors look like."

So time has marched on. The stirring cry of the Lone Ranger, "Hi-Yo, Silver, Away!" has shifted from the radio to another box, the television set. Jack Armstrong, soap operas, and all the rest still go on, but where are the children? If they have a chance, they are used to the television set, not the radio. Here, when wild hoofbeats go pounding down the road, you can see the clouds of dust and the perilous plight of the hero as the bad guys visibly gain on him. This makes a difference, and there is no doubt about it—listening to radio has lost out to watching television. So, since the two have much in common, we shall discuss them together. The programs of both media are good, bad, and superb. In both areas it is a matter of developing children's tastes and appreciation, just as it is with their reading.

When radio first became a common part of home equipment, parents worried over what children listened to, how much time they spent passively, and what inroads Westerns and soap operas would make on their reading. Now television provokes the same concern. In 1948 the parents of boys in a well-known college preparatory school were seriously concerned because all voluntary reading in the home seemed to have come to an end.

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### Why worry about television?

On the physical side television seems to have caused no appreciable damage to eyesight, although parents are warned that there should be light in the room with the television set and that the children should sit from six to ten feet away from it. The bedtime hour of television watchers seems to be a bit later than that of children without sets.<sup>1</sup> But that is within the control of parents.

Radio and television programs are passive entertainment requiring the minimum effort and response on the part of the child, but reading too is passive enjoyment except for the skills involved in the reading process. It is encouraging to be told that children with television are reading as many library books and spending as much time in club activities as children without television.<sup>1</sup> Such findings, however, do not free grown-ups of responsibility. According to one study, the amount of time children may spend watching television averages from seventeen to thirty hours a week.<sup>2</sup> When the child spends an ex-

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cessive amount of time in aimless, passive preoccupation with television, it is a symptom. What is he running away from? What is he finding in these programs that he does not find in the active world of children's play and creative activities of many kinds? The answer may not be any more serious than that he is temporarily finding life dull or discouraging. Whatever the cause, adults should be giving guidance and understanding, rather than simply blaming television.

### Children's program choices

Favorite programs change with the age of the child and the year's offering. One thing is certain—specific programs popular today will be gone tomorrow and in a year or two will be as forgotten as a dream. There is a curious evanescence about them that is not true of children's favorite books. Not only do certain programs disappear, but they go out of favor with inexplicable suddenness. *Howdy Doody*, which in 1950 was a national favorite, had by 1953 dropped to one of the programs most disliked.<sup>1</sup> The same shift in popularity overtakes individual performers, too. Children are not faithful to these programs or performers as they are to favorite books.

It was encouraging when a program as educationally sound as Frances Horwich's *Ding Dong School* became enormously popular throughout the country. It was a god-send to busy mothers of pre-school children and a joy to the children who followed it with earnest devotion. It was true they outgrew it, just as they outgrow kindergarten and proceed to first grade. But a new crop of pre-schoolers arose each year and responded to the bell with equal enthusiasm.

A radio program that has been almost equally successful with older children has been Ruth Harshaw's distinguished *Carnival of Books*. Each week she introduces a book and its author. The book is vividly described, or an excerpt from it is read. Then the author is introduced to a panel of children who may

question him to their hearts' content with Mrs. Harshaw serving as a competent moderator. When a boy asked William Steele why he let old Blue, the dog, be killed in the last part of *The Long Hunt*, he confessed it was a poser. He answered much as the big brother did in the book and added, "The dog was taking a chance and so was the boy. The dog lost and the boy had to grow up." This is reported from the author's memory of what he said. The question made as much of an impression on the author as the episode had made on the boy. These are often significant discussions and have sent many a child to the library for the book, and many an author, we suspect, to a thoughtful reconsideration of his next manuscript.

Westerns rate high with children, now as always. Animal pictures, especially dog or horse sagas, rival the Westerns with children of all ages. Whether it is Flicka or Fury, Lassie or the great-grandson of Rin Tin Tin, these animal heroes, like the cowboys, have character traits which children greatly admire. The heroes are continually misunderstood, but suffer in silence. They perform heroic feats with cool nonchalance, and they are loyal to pals or mate or master with no romantic "funny business" to spoil the picture.

### Family fare

Like radio, television has not been free from murder, violence, and sudden death of a gory variety. Its critics have been numerous, but on the whole neither radio nor television has offered as undesirable material for children as have the comic books, and for obvious reasons. Parents are sharing television programs with their children. Father drops in on a murder mystery his young son is following, and may turn it off. Of course, he may not, too, but most adults are squeamish about such entertainment for children and will help them find a better program, tactfully, we hope, but firmly. Improved taste will probably come only as a result of considerable trial and error.

It has been said that Walt Disney's programs are commercials for his moving pic-

<sup>1</sup>Paul Witry, "Research about Children and Television," *Children and TV, Making the Most of It*, 1953-1954.



tures or Disneyland, but see what they have provided. Most members of the family have shared the child's enthusiasm for Disney's *African Lion*, *Living Desert*, *Vanishing Prairie*, *Beaver Valley*, and all the others in that wild-life series. This is superlative entertainment with high educational values.

*You Are There* has taught history in a memorable way to children and adults, and *What's My Line?* is often as popular with the children as with the grown-ups. Older children, following current events at school, are as thrilled as their parents with political conventions, meetings of the United Nations, televised newscasts, and such momentous events as the inauguration of a President of the United States or the coronation of England's young Queen. Such programs as *Omnibus* and the better dramas are a means of bringing the whole family together to share the same enjoyment. This is significant and would alone justify television as a desirable part of family life.

Incidentally, when children and adults are watching the same program, adult approval or casual criticism gives weight to certain values in the program. Children's tastes are influenced accordingly. The child who has grown up hearing in his home the great music and the better examples of popular music available on radio, television, and records is not likely to stay long with the crooners, groaners, and sobbers who afflict the air.

### Television and the school

Conflicting results have been obtained in research studies of the relation between the time children devote to television and school achievement. This conflict parallels perfectly the contradictory opinions on the question held by parents and teachers. Even this brief listing of television programs shows that they supply valuable leads into science, geography, history, and literature. Have the schools made use of these leads as profitably as they might? If television does not necessarily promote more reading, it can certainly enrich the background for reading in many fields. The sci-

ence programs have been particularly effective in this respect and have sparked many a boy's interest in plants or geological wonders.

In children's literature there are far more possibilities than the program-makers have realized. Even when the "good guy" is winning against incredible odds, no slam-bang Western is any substitute for a well-televised version of *Tom Sawyer* or *Caddie Woodlawn* or *Johnny Tremain*. But there was a televised version of *Heidi* so awful that its slight resemblance to the original was merely an irritant. On the other hand, Maurice Evans' production of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was so perfect in text and pictures that one mother made a dash for her old copy of the book with the Tenniel illustrations. As the picture developed, she showed these to the children, and when they saw what marvelous reproductions the screen was showing, they were fascinated with each new character that appeared. That night the mother read aloud snatches from the book, although the children had never cared much about it. The following week some of them read the whole book with new interest and enjoyment.

So schools, too, can prepare for and enrich a program with surprising results. One high school teacher mentioned casually the Olivier production of *Richard III* and advised the children to watch it. Not one student sat through it, although the class was superior in social backgrounds and better than average in intelligence. In another neighborhood of much lower socio-economic status, the teacher devoted two periods to preparing the children for this most complex and involved text. She listed characters, outlined relationships, and briefed the story of Crookback's villainies. Not only did her children sit through that three-hour drama, but they liked it and offered to read the play for one of their outside assignments. Radio, moving pictures, and television may lead to books, and the school in turn can prepare children for the enjoyment of programs which may be unusual or difficult or complex. Mary Martin's *Peter Pan* needed no briefing ahead of time, but the

children did come back from that play eager for the book. It works both ways.

With few exceptions, television has done nothing for children's literature that is comparable to radio's *Carnival of Books*. Instead it has recently taken to naming a series something like *My Friend Flicka* or *Long John Silver* and then producing adventures that have little to do with the character or the book from which the title was taken. This often means maddening confusion if anyone tries to read the book. Why should good books for children be distorted or debased for the sake of selling Peppy Flakes for Peppy People? Can you think of a more thrilling story for a serial than an authentic life of Sam Houston or Lafayette? And think what a spellbinder *Caddie Woodlawn* would be, or *The Good Master* or *The Ark* or *Amigo*. Perhaps the schools can, by their praise of desirable programs, help to encourage producers of television programs.

#### Schools on the air

All over the country, boards of education have taken over their own radio broadcasting, not merely for lessons in arithmetic or music or language but for entertainment as well. Many of these have now added televised programs, and undoubtedly more will follow.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The University of Wisconsin broadcasts in both media.

Wherever educational groups have assumed responsibility for such broadcasting, children's literature has been given a tremendous impetus. Stories are told, poetry is read, verse choirs of children perform, dramatizations of children's stories are given by the children—and these programs are enthusiastically received by the youngsters. Librarians say there is an immediate rush for the books containing the stories broadcast. Teachers record the children's lively discussions and their requests for "more stories like that."

During a series of literature periods over a Cleveland radio, responses and requests like this poured in, "I am a little German girl. Please tell some more German stories." After the *Volsunga Saga* was finished, some boys wrote, "We're sorry it's over. Those stories were almost as good as the 'Crime Club.'" After a series of poetry periods with upper grades, boys and girls who had not liked poetry before were bringing in poems they had discovered and they were spending their money on ten-cent-store anthologies.<sup>2</sup> After hearing the Benés' "Nancy Hanks"<sup>3</sup> over the radio, a whole roomful of children sent in their answers to Nancy Hanks' question, "You wouldn't know about my son?" To be sure, those children had been reading Sandburg's *Abe Lincoln Grows Up*, and they had been helped with the understanding of the poem by an artist-teacher,<sup>4</sup> but it was their idea to write out their own answers to the question. Do you remember the poem? The wistful

<sup>2</sup>*Two Hundred Best Poems* by Marjorie Barrows

<sup>3</sup>Rosemary and Stephen Vincent Benés, *A Book of Americans*.

<sup>4</sup>Miss Grace McNally, Willard School, Cleveland, Ohio.

Obviously these children enjoy dramatizing "Little Bears" over WBOE, the Cleveland Station at the Board of Education. This station provides children with well-rounded entertainment as well as exciting opportunities for appearing on the programs themselves. Hazel Dell School, teacher, Miss Therese La Marca.

Cleveland Public Schools



ghost of Nancy Hanks asks about her son, "Did he grow tall? Did he learn to read? Did he get on?" Here are two of the answers from the children:

#### I SAW A GHOST

As twilight fell  
O'er the river's banks,  
I saw the ghost  
Of Nancy Hanks  
Floating in mist  
O'er the river's banks.

I told the ghost  
Of Nancy Hanks  
Floating in mist  
O'er the river's banks,  
How Abe saved our nation  
And kept it one,  
How slaves were made free  
By a great man; her son.

As moonlight fell  
O'er the river's banks,  
The smiling ghost  
Of Nancy Hanks  
Faded in mist  
O'er the river's banks.<sup>1</sup>

#### A REPLY TO NANCY HANKS

Yes, Nancy Hanks,  
The news we will tell  
Of your Abe  
Whom you loved so well.  
You asked first,  
"Where's my son?"  
He lives in the heart  
Of everyone.<sup>2</sup>

The opportunities of radio and television programs for children have only begun to be tapped. Some interesting possibilities would be a complete dramatization of the Robin Hood stories, a program of the old ballads both sung and dramatized, readings from *Alice in Wonderland* or *The Wind in the Willows*, or a program made up of Christmas poetry and carols, much as Maude Adams

used them many years ago. State and city schools of the air realize these possibilities. They make use of the talented teacher who reads or tells stories beautifully, and the artist-teacher who can use her children as a medium of expression either in dramatizations or in verse choirs. It is a wonderful chance also to bring together the various arts—music, literature, and dramatics—before the microphone, with art work and the dance in the classroom. WBOE, the Cleveland Station at the Board of Education, is decorated with a continually changing panorama of children's pictures. They send in illustrations of their favorite poems and stories. That they delight in these programs no one can doubt who has watched their faces as they listen.<sup>3</sup>

Meanwhile, teachers must not be scornful of the child's favorite commercial programs, but they should offer him in school something with equal excitement and of a higher literary quality and social significance. Then, as with the comics, we won't be too worried over the blood and thunder, just so the child is getting a continuous exposure to fine literature at the same time.

#### Television is here to stay

We have seen some of the good and bad aspects of radio and television programs for children; there are others. When the child is laid up with measles, television is a blessing, and when he has homework to do, a detriment. Like reading, it is passive entertainment and no substitute for living. It is wonderful to hear or watch a great conductor leading an orchestra, but it is better for a child to play his violin in a family trio or quartet. It is good to watch a televised travel program, but it is better for a child to be at work with his dad in the basement shop turning out a window box. But there is no reason why he should not do both. Some families budget the child's time for watching television—so

<sup>1</sup>Joan Boilleau, Willard School.

<sup>2</sup>Julius Silberger, Willard School. Only one of Julius' verses is quoted because it is, in itself, a complete answer.

<sup>3</sup>William B. Levenson, the former director of Cleveland's WBOE, has written *Teaching Through Radio*, Farrar, 1945. It is a thorough account of the techniques and materials for successful school broadcasting.



*"Once upon a time." A toy microphone adds to the fun of story hour. Lapham School; teacher, Miss Clara Betters.*

Madison Public Schools

much a week and then no more. Or mother agrees that he may watch when homework and chores are finished. If these duties completely prevent seeing a favorite program, she may agree to an interruption of routines for that special favorite. Regulations should be humanely flexible, but some regulations may be essential.

Moreover, it should be remembered that all these mass media of entertainment may stimulate creative activities or lifelong interests. Many older girls have become deeply interested in cooking or sewing by way of televised demonstrations. Ballet programs have pushed little girls into dancing lessons. They may not end as prima ballerinas, but they will grow up to be more graceful and poised young women. The science pictures launch boys' in-

terests in exploration or marine life or perhaps in the wonderful camera work of the men back of the science, or the news pictures. These may become lifelong interests or even careers. Boys also imitate their favorite sports announcers, for better or for worse. Such imitation generally leads to standards of crisp, clear, incisive diction. What radio and television do to help or harm children depends in part upon how young people use them and what guidance they receive from interested adults, at home and in school. It is going to take ingenuity, wit, and wisdom to see that children develop discriminating judgment in their program choices and to capitalize on the best of what they see and hear as leads into other activities and interests of permanent value.

### Children and moving pictures

About the time television was really under way in this country, moving pictures seemed to have reached an all-time low in quality. But with the stiff competition of the new medium of entertainment, moving pictures improved their offering to the point

where they were discussed seriously by laymen and by dramatic critics appointed to cover this field for our leading newspapers and such magazines as *The New Yorker*, *Time*, and *The Saturday Review*. Along with an improved offering, the moving pictures

introduced better color techniques and the wide screen, which greatly enhanced their pictorial impressiveness.

A great national pageant like the coronation of Elizabeth II, recorded in full color and great detail, took on the beauty of reality. Whole families watched this more than once. The small black-and-white televised pictures had scarcely suggested the breath-taking impressiveness of the event. People who had attended the ceremonies went to see pictures of the parts they had missed in the crowds.

"Three-dimensional" movies with their flights and dives are so realistic that some people say they have to take pills for motion sickness. This is certainly the ultimate in realism! But it is still a new marvel, used chiefly for spectacle.

Moving pictures can achieve the heights of great dramatic action better than any other medium except live theater. *The King and I* was a popular and moving musical drama on the stage, but the moving-picture version of it was superb dramatically and musically. The added scope of the wide screen could show palace rooms, street scenes, gardens, banquet halls, and the like as the stage never could. The color, reality, and scope of the finest moving pictures, their greatly improved dramatic offering, and some of the distinguished actors who appear in them make the best pictures formidable rivals of both the theater and books.

### On the debit side

Traveling through the poorer districts of our large cities or in the small towns throughout the country, you will see billboards of moving pictures that you never heard of and never dreamed existed. These include Westerns that are all action and no substance, crime and horror pictures that have the children chewing their fingernails or diving under the seats, and romances so melodramatic or erotic that they are dangerous fare for children and adolescents. The emotional impact of these pictures is sufficiently powerful for them to be remembered in detail. Children store up the

techniques of mayhem, murder, and other crimes. There is considerable evidence to show that, physically roused by the love scenes, thoroughly instructed as to what goes on and why, and equipped with vivid memories of love-making techniques, young people go out from such pictures to experiment on their own. Obviously, television in the family living room is safer entertainment than these third-rate movies.

Sometimes even the better pictures may be challenged. The false ideas they give children, youth, and people overseas of the American way of life are especially regrettable. The staggering luxury of the clothes worn by Hollywood's bustaceous blondes, their blatant sexiness, the continual drink-in-hand of the he-men heroes, and the palatial houses in which they live and loll, are about as true to our workaday American life as *Fantasia* itself. Yet these are the pictures of life that youth accepts as desirable goals to struggle for, and these are the absurd standards by which other peoples may judge us.

The cost of the better pictures is another problem people are discussing. Time was when moving pictures were known as the "poor man's theater." But now the prices for good movies have soared to the point where the average family must think twice before it betakes itself, children and all, to the neighborhood movie. Home entertainment with television is cheaper, easier, and may be just as worth while. Going to see a moving picture has become almost as selective a treat as going to the theater. This is not altogether regrettable. A more careful and intelligent selection is essential. Teach the children that it is worth while to wait for one fine picture and let the rest go by.

### On the credit side

Westerns, forever beloved by children and youth for their thrill-packed action, wild, male, and triumphant, have recently taken on substantial historical themes—episodes from our period of Western expansion, Indians in conflict with the rolling tide of

civilization, settlers, mountain men, and the like. Some of them have been made from notable books. *The Big Sky*, for instance, was an epic-sized tale of mountain men. *Broken Arrow* was the life of the great Indian chief, Cochise. It is such pictures that make it important for parents and teachers to follow the critical reviews of new pictures to help children become selective and still satisfied with their moving-picture treats. These pictures were all Westerns, filled with action, bitter conflict, and both tragedy and triumph, but they had also historical and dramatic substance.

No one who had the fun of taking children to see that glorious picture of a big family, *Cheaper by the Dozen*, will ever forget their uncontrollable whoops of laughter. It was almost any family multiplied. Then when the tragic ending came, the children just stayed in their seats, silent and stunned. One group of boys, with frankly tear-stained faces, kept saying incredulously, "Did he really die like that?" It was hard to accept, but their complete identification with the characters had given them the deep catharsis of drama—satisfying laughter and tears of compassion. As a result, those children would have a more mature understanding of the fact that death does happen, but after such a life it is no defeat. Life has been lived and enjoyed to the fullest. We need more such dramas of everyday people doing the decent, happy best they can.

Comedy has not changed much. Children still cheer the cartoons, and Francis the talking mule delights young and old. To be sure, the subtle and beautiful pantomime of Charlie Chaplin is no more, but England has sent us some choice comedies, such as *Tight Little Island*, *Tony Draws a Horse*, and *Genetieve*. The last with its cross-country race of ancient cars was very funny indeed and brought loud cheers from the boys.

Science, travel, and news are all more impressive in moving pictures than on television because of the color and scope of the screen. Biography is both well and badly done in the movies. Children loved Danny Kaye's *Hans Christian Andersen*, though it bore only the

sketchiest resemblance to Andersen's real life. They will, of course, always think of Andersen as Danny Kaye, and small wonder. The picture was such glorious entertainment that only a few faint grown-up grumbles were ever heard for such a cheerful version of a tragic life. Sir Lawrence Olivier's *Henry V* and *Richard III* were heroic portraits of the men, as well as superlative performances of Shakespeare. Of course, many screen biographies are not suitable for children, and recently there has been a rash of biographical pictures about people whose claim to greatness is as doubtful as the values of the films that present them. Considering the innumerable explorers, scientists, and national heroes past and present who have made permanent contributions to civilization and whose lives have tremendous dramatic potential, it seems a pity to waste so much effort on second-rate subject matter.

On the whole, one of the most successful areas of entertainment for the entire family is the modern music drama in the moving pictures. In the past, musicals were chiefly dazzling spectacles, with gorgeously costumed beauties moving rhythmically to a lot of pretty tunes and an extremely thin thread of story. They were as easy to take as ice cream and as soon forgotten. *Show Boat*, *Brigadoon*, *Oklahoma*, *The King and I*, *Carousel*, and, no doubt, *My Fair Lady* mark a new era. Clever or moving stories with enchanting music send the audience away whistling the tunes, haunted by the story, and eventually buying the records to enjoy again at home. Critics hail these music-dramas as a new art form uniquely American. *The King and I* is typical. It was as popular with children as with adults. The philosophy of those two songs, "I Whistle a Happy Tune" and "Getting to Know You," was appreciated by all ages, as was the pictorial beauty of palace rooms and gardens. And for the youngsters there was the additional attraction of that bevy of royal children with a kingly boy, afraid, but ready to play his part bravely even as his father had done. Here was rare entertainment

for the whole family to enjoy together and share in retrospect.

Books have yielded children some of their favorite moving pictures. Such animal stories as *Smoky*, *Lassie Come Home*, *My Friend Flicka*, *The Yearling*, and *National Velvet* were successful films that led children straight to the books. These movies were so well done that they should be revived frequently. Perhaps some day *Brighty of the Grand Canyon* or *King of the Wind* or *Big Red* will also be filmed. *Peter Pan* and *Robin Hood* have been produced frequently and well. *Ulysses* was too Hollywoodish to ring true, but it had its moments. Joseph Krumboltz's *...and now Miguel* was a documentary film of dramatic and literary value, and while children who enjoyed *Moby Dick* may not be able to read the book for many years, at least the movie made them aware that there is such a book.

For youth, Sir Lawrence Olivier's productions of *Hamlet*, *Henry V*, and *Richard III* made the plays live. Then there were *Romeo and Juliet* and the older production of *Mid-*

*summer Night's Dream*. Children cheered Mickey Rooney as Puck, laughed raucously at the comedy, and were spellbound by the fairies' flight to the moon and Oberon's great cloak of darkness. They loved Juliet's birthday ball, watched breathlessly the duel between Tybalt and Mercutio, and wept unashamedly over the death of the lovers. Best of all, they heard Shakespeare's words superbly spoken. The Hamlet soliloquies, Mercutio's Queen Mab speech, Henry's great speech on the eve of Agincourt—these will live for thousands of young people who, except for the moving pictures, would never hear and see distinguished actors speaking these lines. When the moving pictures can carry great literature to remote places which the theater cannot reach, they are a medium to be respected and encouraged. Parents and teachers cannot afford to be ignorant of the moving pictures' best, and every effort should be made to see that children and youth have a chance to attend such productions, for they encourage and enrich reading.

## Schools, radio, television, and moving pictures

Moving pictures then give—in addition to some dubious material—authentic glimpses of family life in our own and other countries, entertaining stories of many kinds, biography, news, travel, science, comedies, musicals, cartoons, animal tales, and filmed versions of books. It would be stupid to reject this rich offering just because some pictures are commonplace or foolish or vicious. The business of parents and teachers is to know the offering and to give children some guidance in their choice of movies, just as in their choice of books. This can be done by talking casually about the good ones or, better still, by encouraging children to talk about them. Children are apt to be more influenced by the judgment of their peers than they are by the recommendations of adults, who may sometimes seem to them both oppressive and obtuse. A child's rousing account of a good movie sells that picture faster than adult

approval. Of course, the difficulty comes when that child wants to tell about some gangster or horror picture. But we won't snub him then any more than we snub him when he brings in his favorite comic magazine. Instead we'll just say sympathetically, "I know that must have been a thriller, but have you seen *The King and I* yet? I'd rather wait and have you report that because I hear it is one of the big pictures of the year. We can't take the time for all the movies, but you report them; so well you always make us want to see them; so let's wait until you can tell us about *The King and I*."

On the whole, not nearly enough use has been made of the children's tremendous interest in all these media of entertainment. To an astonishing degree, these are molding children's tastes, attitudes, even their interest or lack of interest in books. If we let a child talk about his favorites and if we share some



*The expression on this boy's face reflects an interest which is typical of all children. It is natural that children eagerly absorb the offerings of moving pictures and television. The wise adult will capitalize on this interest to help them develop sound critical attitudes.*

of his enthusiasms, a common bond of interest is created between us. We can also evaluate television, radio, and movie content sympathetically and dispassionately in our classrooms, and perhaps, in some cases, set children straight and give them good leads. We can try occasionally to tie our current events or geography or history or English into a television program or a fine moving picture, when such a combination is possible and worth while. This is only to recognize the best in these fields and to give it our adult prestige. We will also develop gradually, from the children themselves, some

standards for all of these fields of entertainment. Children are keenly critical, too. They are quick to sense anything artificial or pretentious. They will mimic affected radio diction, or resent a too beauteous movie hero. They are equally quick to recognize something genuine. Why not capitalize both on their good sense and on their interest?

We might keep a bulletin board for recommendations of programs the children have evaluated and consider good. Let these represent different fields and be changed frequently to take care of timely or special offerings. Do the same for the moving pictures. Such a bulletin board will help to keep you up to date and alive to any possible correlation between current movies and your subject-matter fields. But most important, the discussions and evaluations of programs on the bulletin boards will help breed more discriminating consumers of both television and movies in the years to come.

### Effect of mass media of entertainment on children's reading

Considering the content of the comics, radio, television, and moving pictures, the most casual observer is aware of some striking similarities. They often appeal both to adults and to children and are not expurgated or toned down to the level of juvenile books. Excitement runs high, action is wild and incessant, adult themes are developed,

adult emotions revealed, and—thanks to pictures and sound—the adult language offers no problem to a child over eight. All this means that today's children are let in for more excitement, more close-ups of the adult world than any generation ever encountered before. They watch love-making that embarrasses adults. They have looked at war pictures



which made adults sick. They endure suspense that is almost unbearable. They are used to the voice of doom threatening dire catastrophes while the family says "Tcht, tcht!" and goes on with its dinner. Will this make today's children more avid for thrills or more immune to emotion or more callous and blasé? Will they read less and less? No one has answered these questions as yet. We have clues, but what they point to we are not sure.

### Children three to six

Little children, three to six, seem to settle down to the old book favorites much as usual. Perhaps *Angus*, *Little Red Hen*, *Peter Rabbit*, and the others are a relief, familiar and comforting, after the violence of the adult world of television, movies, and comics. Some teachers have said they noticed one difference: the children want more stories, more books, something new continually. But does this desire to push on to new books stem from the children or from adults who grow tired of showing the same pictures and reading the same stories? Usually children like to mull over their favorites. If this desire to hurry on to something new does come from overstimulated children, perhaps we should deliberately slow them down. Tell and retell the classic tales. Read and show the choice picture-stories over and over. Say the nursery rhymes and a few fine poems until the children come to know and love them. Encourage the child who looks at *Make Way for Ducklings* until he wears it out. This is the way children should begin to know books—slowly, lovingly, until they possess them forever. It will mean a smaller selection of old and new literature, a selection of the best, because only the best is good enough to immunize children against the vulgarity and violence to which they are going to be exposed.

### Children six and seven

Most children of six and seven are not yet reading any too well, and what they do read is simple in content and style. Much of their lit-

erature is presented to them orally by the grown-ups. Again teachers note a few definite trends. Today's children are interested in the world of machinery and will pore by the hour over books of trains and airplanes. They want stories about real children of their own kind, not children of foreign lands or children who walk with fairies, but just bread-and-butter youngsters in a recognizable environment. They like funny stories and they like animal tales, but the fairies can wait. Is this new centering on realism the result of the adult entertainment children are sharing, or the unconscious emphasis of the adults at home and in school? Who can tell? However, these same children who are known to spend their Saturday afternoons sitting in moving-picture theaters and witnessing heaven knows what in the way of adult dramas, return to their "Dick and Jane" or "Alice and Jerry" stories on Monday with every evidence of enjoyment. They brood over *Ping* as lovingly as if they had never watched a G-Man bump off his victim; Andrewsheck losing the picnic basket to the predatory swan or jumping on the feather bed absorbs them as happily as if they had never been treated to a close-up of tempestuous lovers.

Perhaps such stories give them a sense of comforting familiarity. Here, in the story-books, are things they can understand completely. They can enter into them with a sense of anticipation and certainty. Such literature helps them feel secure in a world of insecurity, gives them steadiness when they see and hear violence which is beyond their comprehension. Andrewsheck loses his picnic basket, but good Auntie Katushka rescues it and the day is saved. Bartholomew Cubbins almost gets pushed off the parapet, but everything comes out all right and it's all very funny. The comics, television, and the movies offer excitement but frequently in an adult setting which is incomprehensible and disturbing. It is possible that there is genuine relief in books which are comprehensible intellectually and emotionally. In these the child finds a world he can understand, pro-

lems he can solve, conclusions he can anticipate. In his books he finds reassurance and gains confidence.

### Children eight and nine

Children eight and nine are beginning to read for themselves. Like the younger children, they turn with curious adaptability from the adult subject matter of moving pictures, television, radio serials, and comics to the simpler, more understandable stories for children. Perhaps they like plots which are a bit stouter, more red-blooded and violent than those enjoyed by children of their age a decade or so ago, but even this has not been proved. The eights and nines, according to testimony of many classrooms, are the ages when the interest in folk and fairy tales begins. "Superman" has not displaced "Hänsel and Gretel," "Snow White," "East o' the Sun," or "Pinocchio." These they read and read again. They dramatize them, draw them, go to the movies to see them, and are as spell-bound as if they had never pored over pictures of jet-bombs, or cringed before the horrors of ghouls and zombies. Along with these tales, they demand stories about "real children" like Little Eddie or Beanie. They turn from this realism to fantasy as comfortably as they turn from adult radio programs and moving pictures to the children's books. Up through the nine-year-old period, then, there is still little difficulty in interesting children in children's books of many varieties, if we know the field and make them available.

### Children ten to fourteen

As we have already noted, it is at approximately the fifth-grade level that reading begins to suffer increasingly from competition with moving pictures, television, radio, and comics. There are several reasons for this. First, this is the age when reading difficulties, if they appear at all, become acute and are the bane of children's lives. A ten- or eleven-year-old who is a poor reader cannot read his geography or history textbooks, let alone a full-length story like *Sea Pup*, *The Ark*, or

*Little House on the Prairie*. Reading is so hard for him that it is no fun. Moreover, his social interests and his appreciation of good stories lie years beyond the age appeal of most of the books he is able to read for himself. The easy reading he can manage he frequently scorns. He grows disgusted with books and turns to the comfortable solace of the movies. These give him a sense of reading power like that of the seven-year-old who thought he could read *Anthony Adverse*. This sense of power may be a delusion, but it must be intensely comforting after a child has tasted defeat and humiliation in his school reading. The comics, in which he can identify himself with his favorite characters as they go through endless adventures, give him this same sense of reading power. Then we hand him a book, and he is baffled and insecure once more. Of course he goes home, turns on television, hears the news, follows a rousing story, and his self-respect is restored. Why should he struggle to read? Why should he bother with books?

These slow readers, or readers with serious reading difficulties, need a preventive program in the first place, a remedial program if necessary. But, above all, they need lots of books which are easy to read but whose content they respect and enjoy. No book is good for a child if he does not like it. Nothing will keep him struggling to learn to read except intense satisfaction from the reading he is able to do. He must have exposure to enough of these good and easy books to gain a sense of fluency, of reading power, without which he just will not struggle. Throughout these chapters, books have been suggested which are easy reading but which still command the respect of older children. Clyde Bulla is writing some of the best books in this field—Westerns, historical fiction, other lands, and here and now. In animal stories, biographies, or studies of foreign lands it is possible, over and over again, to supply children with books at three reading levels—taking care of the poorest readers and the superior readers, as well as the average readers.

Provision of a variety of books is essential.

It is unfortunate that textbook readers were out of style for a while in the middle and upper grades. The results have been disastrous. Good textbook readers for fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, with a sequential development in vocabularies and reading skills and stories so arresting that children are absorbed by them, will not only do wonders for the poor readers but will keep alive in all the children a respect for reading. If these textbook stories have also a high literary quality, they will lift the level of the children's tastes even while they teach them to read and like it. Such readers today are usually anthologies of good stories and will do much to convince children that enjoyment is to be found not merely in the stories of television, the movies, and the comics but in books as well.

The second problem that arises in this

### Children's reading tastes

If publishers knew what children like to read, their books would all be best sellers, and if grown-ups who guide children's reading knew the answers, book selection would be easy. A number of years ago a librarian<sup>1</sup> made a study of children's tastes in reading as evidenced by their unguided, voluntary withdrawal of fiction from some eight public libraries, from Brooklyn to Chicago. Interestingly enough, if that study were repeated today some of the titles might differ but the types of books would probably be much the same. The ten favorites were:

*Sue Barton, Senior Nurse* by Helen Dore Boylston. (Career story for girls)

*The Good Master* by Kate Seredy. (Story of a tomboy)

*Caddie Woodlawn* by Carol Brink. (Story of a tomboy)

*Silver Chief to the Rescue* by Jack O'Brien. (Dog hero)

period of later childhood—pre-adolescence and adolescence—concerns not merely children who are poor readers but all children. The problem lies in the discrepancy that apparently exists between the books literary adults think a child ought to read and the books he actually does read with honest enthusiasm. Librarians and teachers make impeccable book lists based on literary quality. Newbery Medals are bestowed each year upon the most distinguished book in the field of children's literature, and someone is always putting out lists of children's classics "every child should know." But what happens? Many of the books most popular with children are not to be found on these lists while the children themselves fail to endorse with their voluntary patronage the carefully selected literary gems recommended by the adult experts. Why?

*Mountain Girl* by Genevieve Fox. (Home, school, career)

*The Jinx Ship* by Howard Pease. (Sea adventure)

*Silver Chief, Dog of the North* by Jack O'Brien. (Dog hero)

*Who Rides in the Dark?* by Stephen Meader. (Historical mystery)

*Peggy Covers the News* by Emma Bugbee. (Career story for girls)

*Sue Barton, Student Nurse* by Helen Dore Boylston. (Career story for girls)

Mrs. Brink's *Caddie Woodlawn* was the only Newbery Medal winner in the group, while six other Newbery winners were in the least popular class. The results are worth examining in detail. Kate in *The Good Master* and *Caddie Woodlawn* are both tomboys who enjoy as much triumphant action as any boys—always a popular theme with girls. There are also important boy characters in both books to appeal to boy readers. The family backgrounds of both stories are unusually interesting, and both books are well written.

<sup>1</sup>Marie Rankin, *Children's Interests in Library Books of Fiction* New York, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1944.

So is *Who Rides in the Dark?* by Stephen Meader. This is both a mystery and the story of an orphan making a place for himself in the world, another popular theme.

The other seven books are not distinguished literature but they have certain qualities in common. In every case, the style is clear, brisk, and vigorous. It gets the children into the story with the minimum description or delay. The career stories are sincere, with strong emotional tones that keep girls deeply immersed in the heroines' struggles to achieve. Indeed, the characters in all of the books are convincingly alive and understandable to young readers. The adventure tales for the boys are equally realistic. Whether they center on a struggling orphan, men sleuthing or fighting in the far North or at sea, the heroes triumph grandly and satisfy boys' hunger for achievement. Finally, these books all have clear-cut themes, exciting action-plots, wholesome ideals, and courageous attacks on difficulties.

It may seem surprising then that, with all these virtues, seven of the children's favorites are not generally listed among preferred juveniles. Why is this, and why do children neglect many of the books that are so preferred? The first question is readily answered. Many books which are harmless enough do not have any literary distinction. They may be trite or melodramatic or frankly sensational. They are not poor books, but there are better books available. The second question, concerning the conflict between children's tastes and adult standards of what makes good literature, requires a longer answer.

Why people should be surprised at this conflict is difficult to understand. A similar conflict has always been true in the adult field. How many books rated by critics and colleges as great adult literature would appear on a list of the ten most popular books as evidenced by adults' voluntary withdrawal of books from the library? Would you expect to find Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Robert Browning, and Henry James holding their own with the last lurid best seller? Does that

mean, therefore, that we would abandon Browning and Jane Austen in favor of the current popular choices? Are colleges to give up their study of belles-lettres and turn to the best-seller lists for their courses? To be sure, this analogy is by no means perfect because children are not students of literature as such. Children are candidates for entertainment by way of books. But even for entertainment, children can enjoy—with a little guidance from adults—a far wider range of books than they will ever discover when left alone. This is the heart of our problem.

Children know what books they like but not all the books they are capable of liking. Children know what they do not like in books: mystical ideas, descriptions, books written in the first person, "sissy" characters, "queer" or "lofty" talk. Then, under the spell of certain books, they make exceptions to every one of their "hates," as any children's librarian or teacher can testify. Our responsibility as adults is to know their likes and dislikes and then begin systematically to expose them to books which fulfill their needs but at the same time have more permanent significance than the comics or the mediocre books with which they may be perfectly satisfied if they never encounter anything better.

One little girl's idea of verse was limited to the momentary surprise and amusement of the limerick. Yet no child responded with greater delight to a variety of fine poetry than this child when she began to hear and speak it. She developed a keen ear for the subtle music of lyric poetry. She read it continually—which is rare in a child—and she grew up with an extraordinary sensitivity to the varied forms and patterns of poetry. Yet she started with the smallest possible range—the nonsense limerick.

One rural school had only out-of-date readers and no library books to supplement them. Some of the children never voluntarily read anything and others read all the detective stories available. When beautiful modern editions of children's books began to appear in this classroom, reading soared in popular-

ity. The big children read not only their own books but the amusing picture-stories for the youngest children. *Ferdinand* and *Ping*, *Lentil* and *Mike Mulligan* were common property. *The Good Master*, *Carry On*, *Mr. Boudutch*, *Misty of Chincoteague*, *All-American*, and *Tom Sawyer* started many a non-reader to reading and completely reformed the detective-story addicts.

If children are going to read worth-while books, they must be available. Not many families are buying two- and three-dollar books for children, so the libraries and the schools have to get the better books into the children's hands somehow. This is the first kind of guidance for which we are responsible—

### Quick and slow appeal of books

There is another thing we have to remember about books. Like popular music, some books make an instantaneous appeal. Among such books are many good ones and many which are merely slick and trivial. Adults read plenty of this latter sort of trash; so they should not be surprised to find children also amused momentarily by the mediocre. It probably will not harm them—the worst thing it does is to waste their time and perhaps lessen their taste for better reading. Generally such stories are quickly read and quickly forgotten.

There are other books whose appeal is slow, and children sometimes have to be helped to the enjoyment of these by adults. All poetry—beyond the lightest of light verse—has to be heard and heard again by the average child before it is genuinely enjoyed. Children who have the good fortune to hear adults read poetry aloud with unaffected vigor and enjoyment always like it while other children, not so fortunate, say they don't like it. To abandon all attempts to use any poetry with children except nonsense verse just because they think they don't like any other variety is as absurd as to give up trying any music with them except the popular songs they pick up from the radio or

seeing that all children are exposed to some of the best books for their age levels.

Even with such exposure not every child is going to like every good book you offer him. Tastes in books differ almost as radically as tastes in music, or food, or anything else. If a child never develops a liking for one of your pet books, just put it away without regret, and try him with another book of another type. At least you gave him a chance. If he has met *Alice in Wonderland*, he knows what it is about. If he doesn't like it, then he doesn't, but he has had a chance to sample it and to reject it. Both experiences are important to a child who will, you hope, develop into an intelligent reader.

moving pictures. Popular songs and doggerel verse are learned today and forgotten tomorrow. Great music and fine poetry may take longer to appreciate, but they stay with us and their significance grows.

If we are to bridge the gap between the kind of reading the child may pick out for himself and the kind of books we should like him to enjoy, we shall need both time and patience for the slow cultivation of certain choice, but not easy, books. Perhaps we shall have to read some of them aloud to the children, giving them time to mull over them, talk about them, and savor their uniqueness at a leisurely pace. We'll use no check-ups, give no tests, ask for nothing except possible enjoyment. Probably the average child would never read *The Wind in the Willows* for himself, or choose it at random from the library shelves. Are we therefore to drop *The Wind in the Willows* and dwell only on the child's favorite career stories? Many children would certainly never read *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and—with the great influx of new books each year—*Robin Hood* might easily be overlooked. Yet every child should encounter every one of these books before he finishes elementary school. We won't ask that every child should like every one of them.

All we will arrange is that he shall meet these books, have a good look at them, and then listen to adults or other children who really enjoy them, discuss them and compare notes about them or laugh over favorite parts, as all good book lovers have always done since time immemorial. Then if a child says in effect, "Not for me!" that's all right. He has heard us, and we'll listen next to one of *his* favorites.

Great music and great literature are not easy and never have been. That is no reason why we should confine our offering entirely to the instantly enjoyed. Children's tastes grow; their appreciation develops upon what it is fed. Of course a book that bores the children is not good literature for them, even if it is a classic. But if unmusical children can go to the great orchestras and learn gradually to revel in the greatest music, children can hear and see fine books and cultivate a taste for better reading than the average child would ever discover for himself. Read aloud snatches from your favorites, both prose and poetry. Relate certain episodes, or better still, get some child to do so. Never ask, "Did you like that book?" If he did he'll tell you. If he didn't, giving you a docile "yes" won't help either you or the book in his estimation. When you expose him to the best, it must be a comfortable experience.

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So when researchers tell us that certain distinguished juvenile books are not voluntarily read by children, let's remember what most of the adults we know are reading volun-

tarily, and not be too discouraged about the children. If people imply that we had better drop some of these distinguished but infrequently read books in favor of the children's undistinguished but popular choices, let's think twice. American children are now enjoying finer music than ever before, only because infinite pains have gone into the development of their taste. They hear the great symphonies in small doses, with carefully prepared introductions. So we need to prepare and present some of the more difficult and choice books for children, books which they cannot readily enjoy without some adult guidance. Perhaps it would be better if we substituted adult "companionship" for "guidance." Let's make it a slow, happy sharing of a rich experience.

Finally, if books are going to meet the competition of television, moving pictures, radio serials, and comics, we must find many that are easy to read, with clear-cut themes and plenty of exciting action. We must find books which help the child understand his own world today, and sometimes books that help him escape from today by going back to times that were simpler and more understandable. We must find stories as realistic and homey as a loaf of bread, and others as fantastic as a mirage. Above all, to balance the speed and confusions of our modern world, we need to find books which build strength and steadfastness in the child, books which develop his faith in the essential decency and nobility of life, books which give him a feeling for the wonder and the goodness of the universe.

# Guides to study

**G**UIDES TO STUDY provide questions for individual study and class discussion, topics for research, projects for individuals and groups, and suggestions for additional reading.

You will need to read many books to get the full value of this course; so begin now to read two or more of the longer books a week, keeping brief notes for each one. You will need a short outline of the plot, a list of principal characters, descriptions of the type of illustrations and kind of tale (humorous, historical, etc.), and the age range of the book's appeal.

Books for children three to nine are extremely brief. Students who plan to teach children of these ages should review the complete works of an author; for instance, Wanda Gág, Marjorie Flack, Theodore Seuss Geisel, or Beatrix Potter.

Regardless of the grade you are interested in teaching, you should read certain outstanding books, such as Andersen's *Fairy Tales*, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, *Tom Sawyer*, and *The Wind in the Willows*. Why not start with some of these, skimming rapidly if you have read them before? Other books that you should read or review are listed in some of the Guides to Study below.

Later in the course, class periods should be devoted to book reviews and appraisals, so that everyone gets an over-all view of far more books and authors than he could read by himself. This exchange of book reviews might begin even while the reading of poetry is under way. Part of one period a week might well be devoted to a student report on a single author such as Virginia Burton for the early elementary group or Marguerite Henry for the upper elementary. Only by some such systematic exchange can each student appre-

ciate the richness and scope of children's books.

## Chapter 1: The child and his books

1. Give examples of ways in which a child's need for security should expand as he matures. Trace similar changes in his other needs. What types of books might help at each stage?

2. How do you account for the various levels of taste adults have in music, art, and literature? How can teachers and parents help children develop good taste in their reading?

3. What kind of reading for escape do you enjoy? When is such reading desirable and when is it undesirable for an adult? For a child?

4. From children's books you remember, give concrete examples of the influence reading may have in fostering useful social attitudes.

5. Suggest several books which could be used for guidance in a discussion with children. How would you direct the discussions?

6. Choose any well-remembered children's book and see if you can determine which basic needs it seems to satisfy.

## Chapter 2: The adult and the child's books

1. How would you go about introducing a book which doesn't immediately appeal to a child? To a group of children? Why is a careful introduction to such books worth while?

2. By means of the criteria given in this chapter, evaluate five of the children's books you have read. In your notes on the books you read throughout the course, you will find it helpful to make such brief evaluations.

3. Gather together several books with very different styles of illustrations and show

them to as many children as you can—if possible, children of widely varying backgrounds, ages, and interests. What are their reactions?

4. Contrast the earlier illustrations with the more modern ones reproduced in this chapter. What are some specific differences between them? In what ways might each picture appeal to children?

5. What tactics would you use to encourage children to take proper care of their books?

6. From the books which you have already read or which you are already familiar with, make a list of not more than twenty which you consider essential for a library. Keep in mind the basic criteria given in this chapter. Save the list so that you can compare it with a list made near the end of the course.

7. Examine the lists and references discussed on page 36. Which ones do you think may prove most useful to you?

### Chapter 3: Children's books: history and trends

1. Before children had any books written for them, what did they read?

2. What modern publications are similar in some ways to chapbooks? How do they differ?

3. Read parts of the Robert Lawson edition of *Pilgrim's Progress* to a group of children, show them the pictures, and see if they are interested in reading on. Does their reaction surprise you?

4. Do you think stories like "The Purple Jar" achieved the results desired? Why or why not?

5. Compare *Robinson Crusoe* and *Gulliver's Travels*. Did you enjoy them as a child? Why or why not?

6. Discuss Hawthorne's and Kingsley's treatment of myths. How do they differ?

7. Name some other notable books you would add to the list on p. 53 if it were continued into more recent times.

8. How can this background of the history of children's books help you in evaluating the new books for children?

### Chapter 4: Mother Goose

1. Compare six good editions of *Mother Goose* for (a) number of verses (note the proportion of well-known to little-known verses); (b) proportion of pictures to verses; (c) format (print, paper, binding, page size, durability, beauty); (d) illustrations (*types*—black-and-white, silhouettes, colored; *predominant colors*—primary or pastel, bright or dark; *costumes*—modern or period; *characters*—realistic, imaginative, humorous, prettified; *backgrounds*—period or modern, detailed or vague; *style of each artist*).

2. Give examples of some reflections in the verses of earlier social customs and conditions. Would any of these interfere with children's comprehension of the verses? If so, how would you clear up such points?

3. Give two or more additional examples of each type of verse listed on p. 63.

4. Find examples of rhythms in the verses which seem suitable for skipping, galloping, running, walking, swinging, hopping, and trotting. Find good examples of rhyme, alliteration, onomatopoeia, tone color (the use of words to produce harmonious sounds which suit the content of the poem—for instance, long vowels for slow, quiet movement or mood, and short vowels and staccato consonants for quick, gay movement or mood).

5. List verses which would be valuable for speech work on specific vowel, consonant, and combination sounds. Suggest verses suitable for dramatization.

6. Which is your favorite *Mother Goose*? Why?

### Chapter 5: Ballads and story-poems

*Note to students:* The best preparation for the study of this chapter is to listen to the records of John Jacob Niles, Burl Ives, Jean Ritchie, or any other of the ballad singers. Notice the source of their ballads, the subject matter, and the mood.

1. Quoting from ballads not cited in the text, give examples of ballad characteristics (musical quality, dramatic quality, abrupt beginnings and endings, description, incre-



mental repetition, anonymity, subject matter).

2. Choose one of the old Scotch-English ballads and practice reading it aloud. Present it as you would to a group of children—first introduce the ballad and clear up any difficulties, and then read it aloud.

3. Compare our American variants of old-world ballads or our native inventions with the Scotch-English traditional ballads.

4. Choose a story-poem for the grade-level you plan to teach and work out an introduction which would grow naturally out of some classroom discussion or activity.

### Chapter 6: Verses in the gay tradition

*Note to students:* To appreciate the humor or beauty of any poem, read it aloud. You will not only increase your appreciation of the poem but also gain perceptibly in interpretative ability.

Remember that the poems given in this text are only samples and no substitute for the thorough reading of a poet's whole offering. Use this text merely for clues to the types, style, and range of poetry you will find in various poets' collected works.

For class discussion and later for use with children, you will need far more poems from each writer than this book gives. Start now with this chapter to make your own anthology (see p. 206 for detailed suggestions). If you begin collecting favorite poems now and add to them as you go along, you will soon have a very useful anthology. This suggestion is more practical for teachers of the primary grades than for teachers of the upper grades, where the poems are longer.

1. Cite instances from your own experience of the way laughter can dissolve tensions or relieve boredom. Think of some school situations in which a funny poem might come in handy. Why is nonsense verse a good introduction to poetry?

2. What incidents from the lives of Lear, Carroll, Richards, and Milne might you tell to children to enhance their enjoyment of the authors' poems?

3. Compare the verses of Lear with those

of Carroll. Do they seem dated in any way?

4. What proportion of story-poems and lyrics does Laura Richards have in *Tirra Lirra*? What proportion of poems about animals, fairies, nature? What are the outstanding qualities of the verses, and to what ages does the book appeal?

5. What do you know about Christopher Robin from the verses in *When We Were Very Young* and *Now We Are Six*? Cite poems that give you information about his home and its location, his play and playmates, his pets and toys, his attitudes and behavior.

6. Cite the different types of humor found in *A Book of Americans*. Notice also the penetrating and even serious characterizations scattered throughout the humorous verse.

7. Find five poems by David McCord or William Jay Smith which would be suitable for various specific occasions and introduce each to the class in a sentence or two.

8. Bring to class some examples of magazine or newspaper verses for children. Turn the class into a Light Verse Clinic and have each member present her candidates for diagnosis. Does the poem have genuine humor, lively and musical rhythm, and fresh, child-like subject matter, or is it arch or falsely "cute," with pedestrian meter and forced rhymes?

### Chapter 7: Poetry of the child's world

1. If possible, read the Greenaway number of *The Horn Book*, March-April 1946. Examine Greenaway's *Under the Window* and *Marigold Garden* and pick out your favorite verses. How would you use Kate Greenaway's books with young children? With middle-grade children?

2. Is Stevenson's child as solitary as Christopher Robin? Support your answer with evidence from the poems. After you know *A Child's Garden of Verses* thoroughly, select a group of poems and introduce and read them as if to a group of children.

3. Choose some of your favorite Farjeon poems, not given in this text, to read to the class. Evaluate them.

4. How does the little girl in Elizabeth Madox Roberts' poems compare with Stevenson's child or Milne's Christopher Robin in age, activities, way of living, interests, play, attitudes?

5. Compare Winifred Welles' "Stocking Fairy" and "Green Moth." How would you use each with children?

6. Give some specific examples of how Rachel Field's poems reflect the child's sense of wonder and delight.

7. Find five or six verses by Harry Behn which would help the young child to interpret his everyday experiences.

8. Select a poem by Sandburg not given in the text and prepare an introduction for it which will insure the children's understanding of its significance. Present the poem to the class.

9. What values do the best of the "rhyme and reason" verses have for young children?

10. From the work of all the poets considered in this chapter, find examples of lyrical quality, unusual imagery, fresh ways of expressing and enjoying everyday experience, modern insight into the psychology of childhood, useful subject matter, gaiety and humor, response to the child's need for security. The items may be divided among a group and the results pooled.

### Chapter 8: Singing words

*Note to students:* Listen to the poems in this chapter as you would listen to songs or to a Chopin prelude. Remember a prelude or a song or a poem may convey a feeling of gaiety, peace, or sheer joy. If you lose the meaning of the words in the melody at first, it is all right. Try to feel the melody of the words and their mood just as you respond to music.

1. Read Blake's poems until you feel the surging movement of the lines and share the mood. After reading them aloud and hearing them, do they mean any more to you? Do you find that certain lines stay with you, or are these poems just not for you at this time? Be honest but explicit. People may have ex-

cellent literary taste and still not like the same things. What poems of Blake's minister especially to the child's need for security?

2. Find examples of lyrical qualities and tone color in some of Rossetti's verses which are not quoted in the text. If you are with a group of children, read her poem, "What is pink?" and then ask them to try to find examples for "What is soft?" or "What is cold?" or other qualities.

3. How can you make the philosophy of Sara Teasdale's "Night" concrete and understandable to children so that they can give their own examples of "lovely things" that are "not far"? What other poems do you find in *Stars To-night* which may need to be made concrete for children? Plan how you would present a group of these poems.

4. Try some of Elizabeth Coatsworth's comparison poems (other than those given in the text) with older children, and then suggest other pairs, such as softness and hardness, coldness and warmth. Have the children suggest others and see if they can fill in the comparisons. It will be easier to try these in prose, although you may end up with charming free verse.

5. How and when would you use the free verse of Hilda Conkling?

6. Why do you think fairy poems are less popular in the United States than in Great Britain? How would you introduce the fairy poems of Allingham and Fyleman to a typical group of children?

7. Summarize De la Mare's lasting virtues as a poet for children. Point out some of the problems he presents to the teacher of a nice, average group of unpoetic children. Why is it worth while to try to introduce the poems of De la Mare to children who are not immediately interested? What poems would you choose for introducing his work, and how would you launch your readings?

8. From the poets' collections discussed in this chapter, try to find outstanding examples of melody and mood (poetry that expresses gaiety, joy, excitement, peace, wonder, or mystery).

## Chapter 9: Using poetry with children

1. Can you recall any poem that bestowed upon you "a new enthusiasm," perhaps opened your eyes to fresh meanings, restored your emotional equilibrium, or gave you a sudden sense of well-being? Can you explain why the poem had this effect?

2. List some poems which you think illustrate the three important elements of good poetry: (a) singing quality—melody and movement, (b) distinguished or appropriate diction—words that are unhackneyed, precise, and memorable, (c) subject matter which invests life with new significance.

3. Have you had difficulties with poetry for any of the reasons suggested in the text, or for any other reasons? What might have been done, do you think, to have aroused and kept your interest in verse? Make a list of practical suggestions for stimulating genuine enjoyment of poetry.

4. Using the suggestions in this chapter, prepare a fifteen-minute poetry program for the age-group you plan to work with. Practice reading the poems aloud to make the best use of their melody and movement, and plan the introductions to clear up as many difficulties in advance as possible. Allow some flexibility in your program, so that if it seems necessary to do more, or less, rereading or explaining than you had planned, you will be prepared.

5. With all your standards of good poetry in mind, evaluate the offering of any four anthologies listed in the bibliography. Notice the number of poems, the proportion of early and recent poets represented, the organization of the index, the quality of the poems, the age appeal, and any other features.

6. List your personal criteria for a genuinely happy experience with poetry.

## Chapter 10: Verse choirs

This chapter can aid you in elementary work with choral speaking. But if you plan any extensive choir activities, you will need more direction. Find out if the speech department of your college has any special classes or ex-

tracurricular work in choral speaking. If so, enroll in a group if possible or at least try to obtain permission to listen to some of its rehearsals. Attend any choral-speaking programs you can (it's possible that some of the teachers in the elementary schools are experimenting with choir work). Listen to any records of verse choirs now available.

Organize a group of your friends, or turn the class into a temporary choral-speaking laboratory. Follow the directions through, step by step. Keep checking your work with the "dangers" ascribed to choral speaking on pages 224-225. Try out all the suggestions for each type of work. You should find the Supplementary List of Poems in the bibliography helpful for more practice. Take turns directing. Also, sit out occasionally and listen carefully to the others. Take plenty of time for criticism of the work. Read and reread the standards for judging results, pages 225-227.

When you feel that you can direct a group, that you have the different types of work in mind, and that you know some good poems for the group to work with, go ahead. You will gain power, and both you and the children will have a good time.

## Chapter 11: Old magic

*Suggested Reading:* In order to follow the discussion in Chapters 11 and 12, you should be familiar with the following stories at least:

*Perrault:* "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Little Thumb," "Blue Beard," and "Puss in Boots" (p. 353).

*Grimm:* "Cinderella," "Little Briar-Rose," "Little Red-Cap," "Hänsel and Gretel," "Bremen Town-Musicians," "Mother Holle," "The Frog-King" (p. 359), "The Goose-Girl" (p. 361), "Rumpelstiltskin," "Clever Elsie," "Little Snow-White," "The Water of Life," "The Twelve Brothers," "The Fisherman and His Wife," "The Shoemaker and the Elves," "The Nixie of the Mill-Pond," "One-Eye, Two-Eyes, and Three-Eyes."

*Asbjørnsen:* "Three Billy Goats Gruff," "The Pancake" (p. 348), "Taper Tom," "The Lad Who Went to the North Wind," "Boots

and His Brothers" ("Espen Cinderlad"), "Gudbrand on the Hill-side" (p. 349), "Herding the King's Hares," "Dapplegrim," "Katie Woodencloak," "East o' the Sun," "Twelve Wild Ducks," "Little Freddy and His Fiddle."

*Jacobs:* "Three Little Pigs," "Old Woman and Her Pig," "Henny Penny," "Lazy Jack," "Tattercoats" (p. 358), "Catskin," "Jack and the Beanstalk," "Molly Whuppie," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Tom Tit Tot" (p. 356), "The Black Bull of Norway," "Childe Rowland."

*Ransome:* "Sadko" (p. 364), "The Firebird," "Baba Yaga."

*Filimore:* "Budulinek" (p. 351), "Smolichik," "Clever Manka."

*Harris:* Any of the Uncle Remus stories, probably "Tar Baby."

*Arabian Nights:* "Aladdin" or "Flying Carpet."

*American Tall Tales:* Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill ("Pecos Bill and His Bouncing Bride," p. 367).

1. Which theories of folk-tale origins sound most plausible to you? Take some familiar folk tale (not used as an example in the discussion of origins) and tell to which theory or theories it seems to be related.

2. What ancient beliefs or customs are suggested by the story of "The Goose-Girl"? What dreamlike qualities do you find in "Tattercoats," "Sadko," and "The Frog-King"?

3. Read and compare the stories in any two of the following collections: (a) Grimm and Perrault (or Picard); (b) Grimm and Jacobs (or Reeves); (c) Grimm and Asbjørnsen (or Thorne-Thomsen or Jones). Compare their (a) plots; (b) style; (c) types of characters; (d) use of rhyme; (e) proportion and kind of humor and tragedy; (f) proportion of accumulative tales, talking beasts, drolls, religious tales, romance, tales of magic; (g) variations within the same story.

4. Read one other national collection of folk tales (not U.S.). Evaluate the collection for use with children.

5. Compare one American variant of a European tale with its possible source. Read enough of Paul Bunyan or Pecos Bill to get the swing of the tales. Why do you suppose American children are enthusiastic about them?

6. Report on any one of the following topics as it is exemplified in several folk-tale collections: unforgettable characters, notable animals, cinder lads and lassies, the misunderstood, human nature, the will to achieve, poetic justice, "Lover, come back to me," democratic romances, humor, pathos and farce, types of fairy creatures.

7. If you had never read about Paul Bunyan, what would you know about this hero from Rockwell Kent's picture (p. 252)? What are some of the outstanding elements of strength in this illustration?

## Chapter 12: Using folk tales with children

1. Review the needs discussed in Chapter 1. Which ones are especially prominent in the themes of the folk tales given on pages 348-370?

2. Be able to analyze the form of each of these tales as follows: introduction (theme, conflict); development (plot, logic, unity, economy); conclusion (brevity, completeness, justice); style (beginning and ending, dialogue, use of rhymes or repetitional phrases); characterization (much or little?).

3. Prepare one of your favorite stories for telling to children. Any of those listed in the Guides to Study for Chapter 11 or any of those given on pages 348-370 is effective for storytelling. Try your story on a group of children if possible and then on the class.

4. Have you encountered any of the misuses of the folk tales discussed in this chapter? What were the results?

5. Describe any particularly enjoyable uses of folk tales which you have observed. Suggest additional ways of using the folk tales.

6. Tell "Rumpelstiltskin," "Tom Tit Tot," "The Bremen Town-Musicians," or "The Princess on the Glass Hill" to a group of children and then let them illustrate it. This project

is even more interesting if you can compare the results of several groups of children illustrating the same story.

### Chapter 13: Fables, myths, and epics

**Suggested Reading:** In addition to the fables included in the chapter read the following: "The Town Mouse and the Country Mouse," "The Lion and the Mouse," "The Hare and the Tortoise," "The Fox and the Grapes," "The Boy Who Cried Wolf," "The Wind and the Sun," "The Ox Who Won the Forfeit," "Granny's Blackie," "The Banyan Deer," and "The Hare That Ran Away" (p. 370).

Read the following myths in one of the editions discussed in the chapter or listed in the bibliography: "Clytie," "Pandora," "Phaethon" (p. 370), "Demeter and Persephone," "Daedalus" (p. 372), "Bellerophon and Pegasus," and "The Death of Balder."

If you have read *Robin Hood* or the *Odyssey*, review both. If not, read one carefully.

1. What do folk tales, fables, myths, and epics have in common? In what ways are the last three types unlike the folk tales? Why are folk tales usually the most popular with children?

2. Why is it important that children know at least the more common fables, myths, and epics? What modern references to or uses of the fables, myths, and epics have you encountered recently?

3. Compare any two collections of fables (Aesop, La Fontaine, the *Panchatantra*, the *Jatakas*). What might children enjoy hearing about the backgrounds of these collections?

4. Give concrete examples which illustrate the differences between the proverb, the parable, and the fable. What have they in common? Divide the class into groups of five or six, choose a familiar proverb, and try to turn it into a fable. Compare results. Or write a proverb which summarizes the moral lesson taught in one of the modern stories listed on page 288.

5. Examine a collection of fables and list several (not mentioned in the text) which would be comprehensible to children and en-

joyed by them. List several others which are distinctly adult in the foibles they portray.

6. What are the chief types of myths? With what age children would you use these types? Would you tell or read the myths? Why? How might you use "Phaethon" (p. 370) or "Daedalus" (p. 372) with children? How would you introduce them? Would they illustrate well? Try one yourself.

7. What might children enjoy hearing about Homer or about Greek life in general as preparation for the study of the *Odyssey*? Select one story from the *Odyssey* (the Polyphemus or the Nausicaä episodes, perhaps) and compare several versions. Which one would you use with children (consider reading difficulty, storytelling possibilities, illustrations, dramatic appeal)?

8. Read some of the Pyle version of *Robin Hood* (p. 373). Note illustrations, print, reading difficulty. Read enough of the beginning, middle, and end of the book so that you get the continuity of the cycle. Why is this the child's favorite epic? Compare this version with the briefer edition illustrated by Louis Slobodkin.

### Chapter 14: New magic

**Suggested Reading:** In addition to the selections on pages 378-390, read the following stories by Andersen: "The Ugly Duckling," "The Princess on the Pea," "The Little Match Girl," "The Swineherd," "The Brave Tin Soldier," "The Wild Swans," "The Marsh King's Daughter," "The Little Mermaid," "The Girl Who Trod on a Loaf," and "The Snow Queen." Also read *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, *The Wind in the Willows*, *Winnie-the-Pooh*, "The Elephant's Child," and several of Theodore Seuss Geisel's books.

Kindergarten-primary: *Little Black Sambo*, *Millions of Cats*, *Peter Rabbit*, *Mister Penny*, *Runaway Bunny*, one book by Norman Bate, and all of Virginia Burton.

Middle and upper grades: *Pinocchio*, Dr. Dolittle (one book), *Mary Poppins* (one book), *The Borrowers*, one of C. S. Lewis' Narnia books, one book by Robert Heinlein,

*Charlotte's Web*, *Mr. Revere and I*, and *Rabbit Hill*.

1. What elements in Andersen's life account for or are reflected in the stories by him listed above? Which of them would you like to use with children nine to fourteen? Why do children like "The Emperor's New Clothes" (p. 378)? How would you use the stories for reading aloud, for children to read, for illustrating, for dramatizing, for puppetry?

2. What qualities in *Millions of Cats* remind you of folk tales?

3. As a child, how did you feel about *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*? Can you account for your opinion? Try reading parts of it to children and note their ages and reactions.

4. How do C. S. Lewis' Narnia books make use of religious symbolism? What effect do you think this would have on children's enjoyment of the books?

5. Read part of *The Borrowers* to a group of children. What seem to be the chief sources of interest in this book?

6. Look at the illustrations for *The Twenty-One Balloons*. What specific contributions do they make to the book?

7. Quote from *The Wind in the Willows* to illustrate its rich sensory appeal, sly humor, exuberance, sense of leisure, sense of security after peril, and warm kindliness and loyalty. Why does the average child usually enjoy *Dr. Dolittle* more than *The Wind in the Willows*? How could adults help children to the enjoyment of the latter?

8. How does the appeal of *The Tough Winter* differ from that of *Rabbit Hill*?

9. How do you like *Charlotte's Web*? Why do children find it so moving?

10. Compare any of the following with *Pinocchio*: Andersen's stories about inanimate objects, the Pooh books, or Rumer Godden's doll stories. Consider humor, dramatic interest, action, style, age appeal, convincing quality.

11. Why are the Virginia Burton, Hardie Gramatky, and Norman Bate books so satisfying to modern children?

12. Upon what characteristics does the humor of the following books depend: *The Peterkin Papers*, "The Elephant's Child," *Mary Poppins*, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, and *Pippi Longstocking*.

### Chapter 15: Here and now

**Suggested Reading:** *Tom Sawyer*, *Little Women*, *Secret Garden*, *Treasure Island*, and the selections on pages 485-495. The complete offering of each author given in the following lists might be covered in brief class reports by individual students. The reports on books for young and older children should be alternated. In the same way, individual students might report on the books discussed under one of the special groups—Negroes, Indians, mysteries, etc.

Kindergarten-primary: one of the Krauss or De Regniers books, *The Poppy Seed Cakes*, *Pelle's New Suit*, *The Little Auto*, *Wait for William*, one of the Tresselt books, one of the Politi books, two of the Haywood books.

Middle and upper grades: one book each by at least five of the following authors—Ransome, Streatfeild, Van Stockum, Estes, Enright, McCloskey, Cleary, De Angeli, Tunis, Clark, Lenski.

1. What are the main virtues and defects in the realistic books for young children?

2. What are the contributions of Carolyn Haywood's books for young children?

3. How do *Tom Sawyer* and *Little Women* impress you, as an adult? Compare *Tom Sawyer* with one of the Henry Huggins books. In what ways are they similar and in what ways dissimilar?

4. Read several books listed under one of the minority groups—Negroes, Indians, mountaineers, etc.—and report on how each book fulfills the criteria for books about minorities.

5. Read *Sea Pup* or *Good-bye, My Lady* or, if possible, both, and discuss the value each of them might have for an older child.

6. What means does Lois Lenski use to make the characters in her regional books appealing and interesting?

7. What are the virtues and weaknesses of mystery stories for children? What standards for substantial "thrillers" emerge from your reading of *Treasure Island*?

8. Read one of the romances suggested in the bibliography and evaluate it.

### Chapter 16: Other times and places

*Suggested Reading:* *Tree of Freedom*, Hans Brinker, Heidi, *The Ark*, *The Good Master*.

Kindergarten-primary: one of the Dalgliesh books, *Little Pear*, *Crow Boy*.

Middle and upper grades: *Calico Bush*, one Meigs book, or one of the Coatsworth Sally series, *Johnny Tremain*, *Caddie Woodlawn*, one of the Wilder books, one of the Steele books, *Adam of the Road* or *Door in the Wall*, *Young Fu* or *To Beat a Tiger*, *The Ark*, *Dobry*.

1. List your criteria for sound historical fiction. With these standards in mind, appraise *Calico Bush*, *Johnny Tremain*, or *Tree of Freedom*. Cite specific examples to prove the justice of your evaluation. What dramatic elements do you find in the selection from *Calico Bush* (p. 500)?

2. Why is *Caddie Woodlawn* extremely popular with children?

3. Give examples (not discussed in the text) of the way the Wilder books minister to the child's need for security, belonging, achievement, love, change, aesthetic satisfaction.

4. Appraise one of the stories of the ancient world or one of the European historical stories according to your criteria for historical fiction.

5. List your criteria for stories of children of other lands. How do the books of this type that you have read measure up to these standards? What is the theme of each? How much action, suspense, and humor does each have? To what human needs does each book appeal? How much does each tell about life in another country and how convincing is the picture?

6. Compare the children in *The Middle Moffat* (p. 486) with those in *Little Pear* (p.

495). How are they alike? How different?

7. Show how you might develop an integrated unit of work centered on one of the books in this chapter, or growing out of the book.

### Chapter 17: Animal stories

*Suggested Reading:* *Ferdinand*, *Who Goes There?* one of the Buff books, *Buttons*, one of the Henry books, *Big Red*, *Amigo*.

Kindergarten-primary: *The Bear Twins*, one of the Angus books, one of the Newberry books, a Blaze book, *The Biggest Bear*, *Honk: the Moose*.

Middle and upper grades: *Jungle Books*, *Bambi*, *Salute*, *Smoky*, one of the Lippincott books, one of the George books, *Honk: the Moose*.

1. Give examples of animal stories you have read which come under each of the three categories discussed in this chapter. How do they fulfill the standards suggested for each? What types of stories do young children seem to enjoy most? Middle-grade children? Older children? Can you give any evidence?

2. Try to analyze the peculiarly convincing quality of Kipling's *Jungle Books*.

3. Why are the books of Kipling, Mrs. Gall and Mr. Crew, and Jane Tompkins all better than *Black Beauty*?

4. What are the values of books like *Dash and Dart* and *Who Goes There*?

5. Why are Marjorie Flack's books so popular with children?

6. What are the distinctive virtues of C. W. Anderson's stories and pictures?

7. If you were reading *Smoky* or *King of the Wind* to children, how would you handle vocabulary problems? Do you feel the tragedies are justifiable? Compare *My Friend Flicka* with *Smoky*.

8. Look at several of Marguerite Henry's horse stories. Would these books be likely to appeal to children not otherwise interested in horses? What values do the books have for children? How do Wesley Dennis' pictures contribute to the stories?

9. Compare *The Yearling* with *Sea Pup*

and *Goodbye, My Lady*. What have all three books in common besides the boy's love of his pet?

10. Summarize the values and the limitations of these realistic animal stories.

11. Comparing two such dissimilar selections as *Flat Tail* (p. 502) and *Justin Morgan Had a Horse* (p. 504), how would you judge their age appeal, child interest, reading difficulty? To what types of animal stories do they belong?

## Chapter 18: Biography

*Suggested Reading:* Read *Penn* and at least one of the Daugherty biographies.

Kindergarten-primary: The books of the D'Anlares, Bulla, Dalgliesh, Henry, Wheeler and Deucher (not more than one), and the *Childhood of Famous Americans Series*. In addition, read one or two adult or juvenile biographies of national figures such as Washington, Lincoln, Franklin, and Boone, which will provide interesting anecdotes to tell the children.

Middle and upper grades: If you plan to teach these grades, you can group your readings around a period or a special interest (scientists, musicians, explorers, writers). In your selected group, you should read carefully and analyze at least one of the long biographies and skim four or five of the briefer and easier ones in order to gauge their values for slow readers.

1. Appraise a biography for older children according to the standards for good biography outlined in this chapter. Do not use a book which is analyzed in this text.

2. Can you find examples other than those given in this chapter of flowing rhythm in both the text and pictures of Daugherty's biographies? How can you help children to understand and appreciate these unusual pictures?

3. Familiarize yourself with several books in the major biography series. Then appraise each series for such things as age level, factual correctness, style of writing, format and illustrations, and range of subjects. Give some

ideas of the situations in which the books of each series might be most useful. Be sure to consider the differences within each series, too.

4. What notable qualities do you find in this Sandburg selection (p. 576)? Compare it with the usual history-book account of Abe's boyhood or some old-style biography.

5. Skim five or six juvenile or adult biographies for unusual and interesting anecdotes to tell the children on the birthdays of our great men. Present these to the class.

6. Take one or more juvenile biographies and outline a possible plan for using them as bases for the correlation of such activities as English (reading, reports, discussions, written or oral composition, book reviews, dramatization, puppetry, pageantry); art (illustration, murals, scenery, costumes, book design, book-making); music (singing, music appreciation, dances); integration of such subjects as geography, science, history, arithmetic, and physical education—where such integration is natural. Plan a culmination of your unit.

## Chapter 19: Of many things

1. With the criteria for informational books in mind, analyze two or three science books and two or three social-studies books for children. How can you check the accuracy of children's informational books?

2. Choose several common words. Compare the definitions, pronunciations, and other helps given for them in several children's dictionaries and in a reliable adult dictionary. Look up the same subject in a child's encyclopedia and in an adult encyclopedia. What differences in treatment do you find? Are the basic facts the same?

3. How can science books lead to interesting hobbies for individual children and to exciting projects for groups of children? Suggest specific books which might initiate such activities.

4. Evaluate *Pelle's New Suit* and *The Little House* as social-studies books for the youngest. What factors should govern your selection of books for units of study like the farm, the circus, the store, etc.?



5. Read part or all of Hendrik Van Loon's *Story of Mankind*. Could you use any part of it with the grade you are interested in? How would you use it? What influence did this book have upon writers of biographies and social-studies books?

6. Religious teaching in schools is often frowned upon because the average class is usually made up of children of many different faiths. What legitimate use can a teacher make of the new religious books? What varied factors should influence her selections?

7. What are the values of attractive pictures in science, social-studies, and religious books for children? List your criteria for pictures of each type. How do the examples in this chapter fulfill your standards?

#### **Chapter 20: Reading plus**

1. Analyze three or four popular comic books for type, plot, characters, language, satisfaction of needs, format. What possible good or bad effects could they have on children?

2. Divide the class so that each member will be able to watch several children's television programs and so that all the important programs are covered by some member of the class. If possible, watch some of the programs in the company of children. Each person or group of people should then report to the class on the programs watched. How did the children like them? What things appealed to the children? What things weren't they interested in? Evaluate the programs from an adult standpoint.

3. What educational radio and television programs are available in your locality? How are the schools using them? Could they be better used by the schools?

4. Analyze the last three movies you have seen. What ideals and attitudes did they seem to present as good? How desirable do you think they would be for children? How can you help promote critical judgment of movies among children?

5. Which addicts of comic books, television, and movies do you need to worry about? Which children's books that you have encountered do you think would be good bait for these non-readers? It might be worth while to pool class experience and make a list of easy-to-read books that would hold the interest of overage poor readers.

6. Suggest some ways in which teachers can make use of these mass media of entertainment to interest or stimulate children, or to supplement schoolwork.

7. How should you use your knowledge of children's reading interests? Choose some children's classic which is little read but which you believe children would enjoy. Plan how you would present the book.

8. Make a list of not more than twenty books which every child should be exposed to before he leaves the eighth grade. Compare this list with the one you made after reading Chapter 2. Are there differences? If so, how do you account for them? Suggest some plans you have for helping your students to be enthusiastic and discerning readers of many kinds of books.

# Bibliography

LONG as this bibliography may seem, it is essential to realize that it is selective rather than comprehensive. Many of your special favorites may be missing, not necessarily because they are considered poor books, but because it seems better to give samplings of each variety rather than to overwhelm the reader with too many titles.

Some of the choice books or editions here listed were out of print when this bibliography was compiled. They have been retained, generally marked "o.p.," because of their importance as source material. There is always the reasonable hope that these books will soon be in circulation again, and of course many of them are still available in large libraries. There are so many editions of such children's classics as *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, or *Little Women*, or *Heidi*, that only a few have been listed. If these are not obtainable, others will serve.

When a book has been discussed in the text in some detail, this bibliography gives merely the identifying facts of publication. Otherwise there is a comment. Age levels have been suggested—with apologies. Children's reading skills, social maturity, backgrounds, and interests are so varied that their taste in books is almost unpredictable. Moreover, a skillful teacher or parent can win enthusiastic support for almost any book he himself enjoys. The suggested age range of a book's appeal is, therefore, only a rough index.

Listings are alphabetical, with the exception of a few series of books where chronological order indicates the order in which the books should be read.

It is with special gratitude that the author acknowledges the expert assistance of Miss Margaret M. Clark, head of the Lewis Carroll Room of the Cleveland Public Library. She did the major part of the revision of the bibliographies for Chapters 11 through 19. Without her aid this new edition could not have been completed in time.

## Chapter 1 The child and his books

### Adult References

ASTLEY, STEEL. *A Year Child Learns to Read*. ill. by Helen Carter and Eva Hoffman. Scott, 1953. A reading specialist discusses the learning-to-read process from a developmental angle. Chapter 6 shows how the child's widening interests in many kinds of books are encouraged in schools and homes.

DUFF, ANNIS. *"Bequest of Wings."* Viking, 1944. A pleasant account of one family's use of books, pictures, and music.

FRANK, JOSETTE. *Your Child's Reading Today*. Doubleday, 1954. Sensible advice from a pioneer in the child study movement concerning a child's reading, given from the standpoint of his social-emotional development. Don't deprecate his tastes, she advises, but capitalize on reading enjoyment.

GETSILL, ARNOLD, and FRANCES ILC. *Child Development; An Introduction to the Study of Human Growth*. Harper, 1949. This research study considers child growth in its broadest sense—intellectual, emotional, and social—from infancy through adolescence. Lucid style and revealing case histories make this a readable and essential book for parents and teachers.

HEATON, MARGARET, and HELEN LEWIS. *Reading Ladders for Human Relations*. American Council on Education, 1954. This enlarged and revised edition contains an introduction on the rôle of reading in developing children's self-knowledge and social awareness. Books are grouped under such categories as "Patterns of Family Life," "Community Contrasts," "Economic Differences," "Experiences of Acceptance and Rejection," and the like.

HYMES, JAMES LEE. *Understanding Your Child*. Prentice-Hall, 1952. This is a practical and entertaining discussion of child behavior and parent-child conflicts. It is built around these four major considerations: children grow, there is a plan to their growth, they want things out of life, and there is a reason for their behavior.

ILC, FRANCES L., and LOUISE BATES AMES. *Child Behavior*. Harper, 1955. Frances ILC, M.D., and Louise Ames, Ph.D., give direct advice, based on their research at the Gesell Institute, to parents concerning problems of child behavior. The book is an extension of their popular and widely syndicated newspaper column.

JENKINS, GLADYS, HELEN SHACTER, and WILLIAM BAUER. *These Are Your Children*. Scott, 1953. A series of case studies with charts of normal child development and the special needs of children at various ages, enlivened by photographs of children in problem situations or normal activities.

MONROE, MARION. *Growing into Reading*. Scott, 1951. In a delightfully written book, a reading specialist shows how reading readiness may be developed in the home as well as the school.

MOORE, ANNE CARROLL. *My Road to Childhood*. Doubleday, 1939. A distinguished librarian and



## Chapter 3 Children's books: history and trends

### Adult References

- ADAMS, BESS PORTER. *About Books and Children*. Holt, 1953. A brief survey of early books for children and their modern descendants, with good chapters on juvenile magazines and on illustration. Almost half of the text is devoted to bibliographies without annotations.
- ASHTON, JOHN. *Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century*. London: Chatto, 1882, o.p. The author reproduces the stories and some of the pages and illustrations from the old chapbooks.
- BARRY, FLORENCE V. *A Century of Children's Books*. Doran, 1923, o.p. A readable account of early English books for children, with unusually good evaluations.
- DARTON, F. J. H. *Children's Books in England: Five Centuries of Social Life*. London: Cambridge, 1932, o.p. A scholarly study of children's books, from the fables to Robert Louis Stevenson. Chapter VII is about John Newbery and the first English books for children.
- DAVIS, MARY GOULD. *Randolph Caldecott*. Lippincott, 1946, o.p. An appreciation of Caldecott's work, not so rich or full as might be expected.
- FIELD, WALTER TAYLOR. *A Guide to Literature for Children*. Ginn, 1928, o.p. An early book on children's literature with many useful chapters and a sound point of view.
- FOLMSBEE, BEULAH. *A Little History of the Horn-Book*. Horn Book, 1942. A tiny book, beautifully printed, with a history of hornbooks in all their variations both in England and New England.
- FORD, PAUL LEICESTER, ed. *The New England Primer*. Dodd, 1897. The subtitle explains the content, "A history of its origin with reprint of the unique copy of the earliest known first edition."
- GREEN, ROGER LANCELYN. *Tellers of Tales*, ed. E. Ward, 1953. This is a delightfully written discussion of English authors of children's books from 1839 to the present. Only twenty pages are devoted to modern writers.
- HAZARD, PAUL. *Books, Children and Men* (see Bibliography, Chapter 2).
- JORDAN, ALICE M. *From Rollo to Tom Sawyer*. The Horn Book, 1948. Here in beautiful format with decorations by Nora Uawin are twelve little essays on some of the most important 19th-century writers for children.
- KIEFER, MONICA. *American Children Through Their Books, 1700-1833*. Univ. of Pa. Press, 1948. The American child at the beginning of the 18th century was too insignificant for physicians to waste time on, the author tells us. She traces his developing place in the world through an examination of children's books.
- LANG, ANDREW, ed. *Perrault's Popular Tales*. London: Clarendon, 1888, o.p. A careful study of Perrault and the tales he edited.
- MAHONY, BERTHA E., LOUISE F. LATIMER, and BEULAH FOLMSBEE. *Illustrators of Children's*

- Books, 1744-1945* (see Bibliography, Chapter 2).
- MEIGS, CORNELIA, ANNE EATON, ELIZABETH NESBITT, and RUTH HILL VIGUERS. *A Critical History of Children's Literature*. Macmillan, 1953. Three librarians and an author of children's books have surveyed the field from ancient to recent times. The evaluations of books, authors, illustrators, and trends make this a valuable reference.
- MUIR, PERCY. *English Children's Books, 1600 to 1900*. Praeger, 1954. Mr. Muir acknowledges his indebtedness to the books of Darton and the Opies, but his work adds to both. There are excellent indexes and lavish illustrations from the books discussed.
- OPIE, JONA and PETER, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes* (see Bibliography, Chapter 4).
- WELSH, CHARLES. *A Bookseller of the Last Century, Being some Account of the Life of John Newbery, and of the Books he published with a Notice of the later Newberys*. London: Griffith, Farran, 1885, o.p. A readable history of Newbery, his famous bookshop, and his varied activities.
- , ed. *The Renowned History of Little Goody Two Shoes, Otherwise Called Mrs. Margery Two Shoes*, attributed to Oliver Goldsmith. Heath, 1930.

### Children's books

- BUNYAN, JOHN. *Pilgrim's Progress*, ed. by Mary Godolphin, ill. by Robert Lawson. Lippincott, 1939. Children who might not otherwise be attracted to *Pilgrim's Progress* are won by this skillfully shortened and well-illustrated edition. 8-12
- CALDECOTT, RANDOLPH. *Randolph Caldecott's Collection of Pictures and Songs*. Warne, n.d.
- , *Randolph Caldecott's Second Collection of Pictures and Songs*. Warne, n.d.
- The material of these two volumes is also published by Warne in a four-volume set, *Randolph Caldecott's Picture Books*, and in the following sixteen separate paper-bound volumes: *John Gilpin*; *Housethat Jack Built*; *Babes in the Wood*; *Elegy on a Mad Dog*; *Three Jovial Huntsmen*; *Sing a Song for Sixpence*; *Queen of Hearts*; *The Farmer's Boy*; *The Milkmaid*; *Hey Diddle Diddle*; *and Baby Bunting*; *A Frog He Would A-Wooing Go*; *The Fox Jumps Over the Parson's Gate*; *Come, Lasses and Lads*; *Ride a Cock Horse*; *Mrs. Mary Blaise*; *The Great Panyandrum Himself*. 4-14
- DEFOE, DANIEL. *Robinson Crusoe*, ill. by J. Ayton Symington, 1920. Dutton, 1954 (Children's Illustrated Classics). A good standard edition for children, with attractive illustrations. 10-14
- PERRAULT, CHARLES. *All the French Fairy Tales*, retold by Louis Untermeyer, ill. by Gustave Doré. Dider, 1946, o.p. A fine source for storytelling and pictures. 8-12
- , *Tales of Mother Goose*, as first collected in 1696, tr. by Charles Welsh, ill. by D. J. Munro after drawings by Gustave Doré. Heath, 1901, o.p. All of the eight stories are included, but the Doré illustrations suffer greatly from the copying. 8-10
- SWIFT, JONATHAN. *Gulliver's Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World*, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Dutton, 1952 (Children's Illustrated

Classics). It is good to have a new printing of this excellent edition with Rackham's pictures. 10-14

## Chapter 4 Mother Goose

### Children's editions

- BENÉY, WILLIAM ROSE, ed. *Mother Goose: A Comprehensive Collection of the Rhymes*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Heritage, 1936. This is a sprawling, riotously illustrated edition of four hundred rhymes. Children love the vivid colors and horse-play of the cartoon-like illustrations, although some adults detest them. Like it or leave it, it is a provocative edition.
- Berta and Elmer Hader's *Picture Book of Mother Goose*, rev. ed., ill. by Berta and Elmer Hader. Coward-McCann, 1944. Traditional rhymes, singing games with music, and a group of lullabies, some old and some comparatively modern, have made this a well-liked though small collection.
- CALDECOTT, RANDOLPH. *Hey Diddle Diddle Picture Book*, ill. by author. Warne, n.d. Some of Caldecott's finest pictures accompany favorite rhymes of the nursery.
- LINES, KATHLEEN, ed. *Lavender's Blue*, ill. by Harold Jones. Watts, 1954.
- Marquise de Angeli's *Book of Nursery and Mother Goose Rhymes*, ill. by Marquise de Angeli. Doubleday, 1954.
- Mother Goose*, ill. by Kate Greenaway. Warne, n.d.
- Mother Goose*, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Century, 1913, o.p.
- Mother Goose*, ill. by Tasha Tudor. Oxford, 1944.
- OPIE, IONA, ed. *Ditties for the Nursery*, ill. by Monica Walker. Oxford, 1954.
- OPIE, IONA and PETER, eds. *The Oxford Nursery Rhyme Book*, ill. from old chapbooks, with additional pictures by Joan Hassall. Oxford, 1955.
- The Real Mother Goose*, ill. by Blanche Fisher Wright. Rand McNally, 1916.
- The Real Mother Goose: Popular Edition*, ill. by Blanche Fisher Wright. Rand McNally, 1942, o.p. This is a junior edition with fewer rhymes.
- Ring o' Roses: A Nursery Rhyme Picture Book*, ill. by L. Leslie Brooke. Warne, n.d.
- The Tall Book of Mother Goose*, ill. by Feodor Rojankovsky. Harper, 1956.
- The Teggren Mother Goose*, ill. by Gustaf Tenggren. Little, 1940, o.p. Gay, Disney-like pictures which do not always illustrate the rhymes near which they appear.

### A few variants of Mother Goose

- KAPP, PAUL, ed. and music arr. by. *A Cat Came Fiddling and Other Rhymes of Childhood*, ill. by Irene Haas. Harcourt, 1956. Here is enchantment for children and grown-ups, at home or in school. The pictures are droll and perfect, and Burl Ives says of the music, "It sounds as though it had never been written but only sung." All ages
- LANGSTAFF, JOHN. *Frog Went a-Courtin'*, ill. by Feodor Rojankovsky. Harcourt, 1955. 4-6

- LOW, JOSEPH and RUTH. *Mother Goose Riddle Rhymes*, ill. by Joseph Low. Harcourt, 1953. Mr. Low has made a modern rebus from nursery rhymes that is beautiful in design and clever in conception—a brain teaser for young and old. 6-9
- MORRISON, LILLIAN, ed. *Black Within and Red Without*, ill. by Jo Spier. Crowell, 1953. A scholarly collection of rhymed riddles, wise, witty, and often as charming as poetry. Here are traditional puzzlers from ancient Egypt, Greece, the British Isles, the Orient, and our own Ozarks.
- A *Dollar a Dollar*, ill. by Marj Bauernschmidt. Crowell, 1955. Here is an exceedingly funny collection of anonymous "Rhymes and Sayings for the Ten O'clock Scholar." Over three hundred school riddles, sayings, derisive taunts, jokes, and proverbs will be sure to enliven classroom routines. 6-9
- PETERSHAM, MAUD and MISKA. *The Rooster Crows: A Book of American Rhymes and Jingles*. Macmillan, 1945. 5-7
- WITHERS, CARL, ed. *A Rocket in My Pocket*, ill. by Susanne Suba. Holt, 1948. "The Rhymes and Chants of Young Americans" is the subtitle of this amusing collection of tongue twisters, rhymes for counting out, jumping rope, bouncing balls, and the like. In the slangy vernacular of the street, it is as modern as bubble gum, and perhaps better for adults than children. 6-8
- WOOD, RAY. *The American Mother Goose*, ill. by Ed Hargis. Lippincott, 1940. 8-12

### ABC books

- CRANE, WALTER. *Baby's Own Alphabet*, ill. by author. Dodd, n.d. 5-7
- DUVOISIN, ROGER. *A for the Ark*, ill. by author. Lothrop, 1952. 5-8
- EICHENBERG, FRITZ. *Ape in a Cape*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1952. 5-8
- FRANÇOISE [pseud. for Françoise Seignobosc]. *The Gay A B C*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1938. 5-7
- GAG, WANDA. *The A B C Bunny*, ill. by author. Coward McCann, 1933. 5-7
- GREENAWAY, KATE. *An Apple Pie*, ill. by author. Warne, n.d. 5-7
- MCGINLEY, PHYLLIS. *All Around the Town*, ill. by Helen Stone. Lippincott, 1948. 6-10
- NEWBERRY, CLARE. *The Kitten's A B C*, ill. by author. Harper, 1946. 5-7
- TUDOR, TASHA. *A is for Annabelle*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1954. 5-7

### Adult references

- ADAMS, BESS PORTER. *About Books and Children* (see Bibliography, Chapter 3).
- BARNES, WALTER. *The Children's Poets*. World Book, 1924, o.p. This valuable little book contains a fine chapter (II) on Mother Goose and children's enjoyment of it.
- ECKENSTEIN, LINA. *Comparative Studies in Nursery Rhymes*. London: Duckworth, 1906, o.p. A study of the ancient folk origins of the Mother Goose verses and their European counterparts.

FIELD, WALTER TAYLOR. *A Guide to Literature for Children* (see Bibliography, Chapter 3). Chapter X is on Mother Goose.

MAHONY, BERTHA E., LOUISE P. LATIMER, and BEULAH FOLMSBEE. *Illustrators of Children's Books, 1744-1945* (see Bibliography, Chapter 2).

MEIGS, CORNELIA, ANNE EATON, ELIZABETH NESBITT, and RUTH HILL VIGUERS. *A Critical History of Children's Literature* (see Bibliography, Chapter 3). Chapter 6, Part I, deals with the early history of Mother Goose.

MUIR, PERCY. *English Children's Books, 1600-1900* (see Bibliography, Chapter 3). Chapter II, p. 72-78.

OPIE, IONA and PETER, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes*. Oxford, 1951. This is the most exhaustive and scholarly study yet made of the origins of the nursery rhymes, their earliest recordings, and variations through the years. Copious illustrations from old plates add to its interest.

THOMAS, KATHERINE ELWIS. *The Real Personages of Mother Goose*. Lothrop, 1930.

## Chapter 5 Ballads and story-poems

### Ballad references

ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM. *The Ballad Book*. Cambridge: Sever and Francis, 1865, o.p. Contains seventy-six ballads with brief notes and an excellent introduction.

CHILD, FRANCIS JAMES. *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, 5 vols. Houghton, 1882-1898, o.p. This is our most authoritative source for all English and Scotch traditional ballads. Many variants are given for each ballad, together with copious notes.

GUMMERE, FRANCIS B. *The Popular Ballads*. Houghton, 1907, o.p. A detailed account of the origins, definitions, classifications, and sources of the ballads. An exposition of his theory of the communal composition of ballads.

HALES, JOHN W., and FREDERICK J. FUERNIVALL, assisted by Francis J. Child. *Bishop Percy's Folio Manuscript*. London. Trübner, 1867, o.p. Here are the ballads that Bishop Percy found, together with the reproduction of an actual page of the manuscript with Percy's notes scribbled in the margin.

KITTREDGE, GEORGE LYMAN, ed. *English and Scottish Popular Ballads Student's Cambridge Edition*, ed. by Helen Child Sargeant. Houghton, 1904, o.p. This is the invaluable one volume edition of the Child collection. It contains the 305 ballads, a few variants of each, brief notes, and the excellent glossary giving the definitions and pronunciations of the difficult ballad words.

KRAPPE, ALEXANDER HAGGERTY. *The Science of Folk-Lore*. Dial, 1930, o.p. Chapter IX, "The Popular Ballad," discusses the ballad as part of the great stream of folklore, related to the epic, the carol, and the folk tale, migrating even as they have. Discredits Gummere's theory of communal composition.

LOMAX, JOHN A. *Adventures of a Ballad Hunter*.

Macmillan, 1947. An amusing account of the people and places from which Lomax gathered ballads.

——, ed. *Songs of the Cattle Trail and Cow Camp*. Little, 1950.

LOMAX, JOHN A. and ALAN LOMAX, eds. *American Ballads and Folk Songs*. Macmillan, 1946.

——, eds. *Cowboy Songs and Other Frontier Ballads*, rev. and enl. Macmillan, 1948. The Lomax collections of our native ballads are of major importance as sources, not only because they were the first ones made, but also because they were gathered first-hand and the tunes were recorded on wax cylinders, on the spot, unedited. They retain the dialects as well as the unpolished, unsophisticated music.

POUND, LOUISE. *American Ballads and Songs*. Scribner, 1922, o.p. A good collection of United States remnants of old ballads along with our native compositions. No music. Excellent introduction.

——, *Poetic Origins and the Ballad*. Macmillan, 1921, o.p. The author furnishes lively evidence against the communal origin of the ballad, besides adding fresh background to ballad history.

RITCHIE, JEAN. *Singing Family of the Cumberlands*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Oxford, 1955.

SANDBURG, CARL, ed. *The American Songbag*. Harcourt, 1930. While this collection borrows from others, Mr. Sandburg's fresh and illuminating notes for each ballad make it a particularly useful and enjoyable volume.

SHARP, CECIL J., and MAUD KARPELES, eds. *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians*, rev. and enl. Oxford, 1933, 2 vols. This edition is a major contribution by an important English collector and musician.

——, eds. *Nursery Songs from the Appalachian Mountains*, 2 vols. London: Novello, 1921-1923. A collection that should be better known in our schools. Many appropriate selections for the youngest children to hear and sing.

*Some British Ballads*, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Dodd, [1920], o.p. This is a superb edition for home and school. The Rackham illustrations add to the excitement of these selections.

### Other sources

Most of the poetry anthologies listed on pp. 619-620 contain sections devoted to old ballads or to modern story-poems. Of these anthologies, *My Poetry Book*, by Hufhard, Carlisle, and Ferris, contains an unusually large and well-selected group of narrative poems suitable for the elementary school.

BONTI, MARGARET BRADFORD, ed.  *Fireside Book of Folk Songs*, arr. for piano by Norman Lloyd, ill. by Alice and Martin Provensen. Simon & Schuster, 1947. A beautiful collection of many types of folk songs to be enjoyed by the whole family.

BROWNING, ROBERT. *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*, ill. by Kate Greenaway. Warner, n.d. Kate Greenaway made some of her loveliest pictures for this story-poem. The costumed figures in soft pastels are gaily active with the stodgy burghers in dour contrast to the racing children.

CHASE, RICHARD, ed. *Hullabaloo and Other Singing Folk Games*, arr. for piano by Hilton Ruffy, ill. by

- Joshua Tofford. Houghton, 1949, o.p. Eighteen singing games and dances with pictures and diagrams. All ages
- FELTON, HAROLD W. *Cowboy Jamboree: Western Songs and Lore*, music art. by Edward S. Breck, ill. by Aldren A. Watson, foreword by Carl Carmet. Knopf, 1951. This small collection of only twenty songs is especially valuable because of the little introductions to each song giving its background of cowboy lore. 6—
- FERRIS, HELEN, ed. *Love's Enchantment*, ill. by Vera Bock. Doubleday, 1944. Romantic ballads, a collection especially popular with girls. 12—
- MALCOLMSON, ANNE, ed. *Song of Robin Hood*, music arr. by Grace Castagnetta, ill. by Virginia Burton. Houghton, 1947. A collector's item, this beautiful book is invaluable as a source both for ballad text and music. The marvelous pictures suggest dramatizations. 12—
- MOORE, CLEMENT CLARK. *The Night Before Christmas*, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Lippincott, 1954. A new edition with Rackham's lovely pictures for this old favorite. 4-7
- . *The Night Before Christmas*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Grosset, 1949. Bold, bright colors and design characterize this big modern edition of the Christmas classic. 4-7
- PARKER, ELINOR. *100 Story Poems*, ill. by Henry C. Fitz. Crowell, 1951. All the old story-poems are here, and the favorites of the past may well be favorites again. 8-14
- RITCHIE, JEAN. *The Swapping Song Book*, ill. with photographs by George Pickow. Oxford, 1952. All ages
- SEIGER, RUTH CRAWFORD. *American Folk Songs for Children: In Home, School, and Nursery School*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Doubleday, 1948. Contains an introduction for parents, songs and fun for everyone. Some of the ballads are of European origin, others seem to be native, and all are enhanced by delightful illustrations. 4—
- . *Animal Folk Songs for Children: Traditional American Songs*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Doubleday, 1950. An interesting introduction discussing our native animal folklore. Songs and illustrations are excellent and two of the ballads, "Raccoon and Possum" and "Old Fox," will stand without the music. 4—
- , ed. *Let's Build a Railroad*, ill. by Tom Funk. Aladdin, 1954. 4-9
- WIGGIN, KATE DOUGLAS, and NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH. *Golden Numbers* Doubleday, 1902. Contains a large selection of ballads and story poems from older sources. 6-14
- Inheritance of Poetry*. Houghton, 1948. A large collection of unusual poems, chiefly for adolescents, but with some exquisite bits for children. 10-16
- ARBUTHNOT, MAY HILL, ed. *Time for Poetry*, gen. ed., rev., ill. by Arthur Paul, Scott, 1961. Over seven hundred poems, from Mother Goose to T. S. Eliot. Introduction on the use of poetry with children and on the use of poetry in verse choirs, footnotes for choral reading, and delightful pen-and-ink pictures. Also included in *The Arbuthnot Anthology*. 4-14
- Association for Childhood Education, Literature Committee. *Sung Under the Silver Umbrella*. Macmillan, 1935. A small collection of choice poetry, including selections from the Bible, modern poems, nonsense verse, and Japanese *haiku*. 4-9
- BREWTON, SARA and JOHN E., eds. *Sing a Song of Seasons*, ill. by Vera Bock. Macmillan, 1955. The Brewtons are excellent anthologists who can be depended upon for the high quality of their selections. *Gayly We Parade*, *Under the Tent of the Sky*, and this book are especially popular. 6-12
- COLE, WILLIAM, ed. *Humorous Poetry for Children*, ill. by Ervine Metz. World Pub., 1955. Laughter unlimited! This collection ranges from wild nonsense to the cleverest of light verse, sometimes more adult than "for children." 8—
- DE LA MARE, WALTER. *Come Hither*, ill. by Alec Buckels. Knopf, 1928. An anthology of imaginative poetry for adolescents and adults. An entrancing collection with notes by the poet which are treasures in themselves. 14—
- DOANE, PELAGIE, ed. *A Small Child's Book of Verse*, ill. by ed. Oxford, 1948. Popular with children because of its illustrations in full color. 5-10
- EATON, ANNE THAXTER, ed. *Welcome Christmas!* ill. by Valenti Angelo. Viking, 1955. A garland of some fifty Christmas poems, chosen with exquisite taste and given format and decorations of fitting beauty. All ages
- GARNETT, EVE, ed. *A Book of the Seasons*, ill. by ed. Bentley, 1953. Brief excerpts, sometimes only two lines long, chiefly from adult English poems, will give children a taste of authentic poetry. The exquisite pencil sketches show younger children than those to whom the verses may appeal. 6-12
- HUFFARD, GRACE T., and others, eds. *My Poetry Book*, rev. ed., intro. by Marguerite de Angeli, ill. by Willy Pogany. Winston, 1956. A well-organized collection of some five hundred poems, with plenty of moderns. 6-14
- HUTCHINSON, VERONICA, comp. *Chimney Corner Poems*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Putnam, 1929, o.p.
- . *Preside Poems*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Putnam, 1930, o.p.
- The first of these books is for younger children, the second for older ones. Both contain a good selection of authentic poetry old and new. Both are well illustrated in color. 5-10
- PLOTZ, HELEN, ed. *Imagination's Other Place: Poems of Science and Mathematics*, ill. by Clare Leighton. Crowell, 1955. The most unusual anthology in this bibliography is a book for the whole family. With excerpts from the Bible and from old and modern poems written about science and mathematics, this collection ranges from atoms to relativity, Euclid

## Chapters 6-9 Poetry for children

### Children's books: anthologies

There are so many good anthologies of poetry for children that it is not possible to list them all here. The following are especially useful for reasons the notes make clear.

ABSHLEAD, GLADYS L., and ANNIS DUFF, eds. *An*

- to Einstein, and from modern surgery to God. 12—
- SECHRIST, ELIZABETH, ed. *One Thousand Poems for Children*, based on the selections of Roger Ingpen. Macrae-Smith, 1946. A tremendous collection, excellent for a library reference in schools or homes. All ages
- SMITH, JANET ADAM, ed. *The Faber Book of Children's Verse*. London: Faber, 1953. Eight- to fourteen-year-old English children may rise to this collection, but in this country it will fit chiefly the high school levels. An unusual selection of fine poetry makes it well worth knowing. 12—
- THOMPSON, BLANCHE, ed. *More Silver Pennies*. Macmillan, 1938. 10-16
- , ed. *Silver Pennies*. Macmillan, 1925.
- Small collections of choice modern poetry for children and youth, with brief introductions to each poem. 8-12
- UNTERMAYER, LOUIS, ed. *Rainbow in the Sky*, ill. by Reginald Birch. Harcourt, 1935. Mr. Untermeyer was one of the first and most indefatigable anthologists for children. This is only one of his many books. They lean heavily on old and familiar poems. 7-12
- VAN DOREN, MARK, ed. *Anthology of World Poetry*. Harcourt, 1936. A collection of choice poems on an international scale, going back to ancient literatures and including modern poetry as well. 12—
- ### Children's books: by individual poets
- ALDIS, DOROTHY. *All Together: a Child's Treasury of Verse*. Putnam, 1952. See discussion, p. 150. 5-9
- ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM. *The Fairy Shoemaker and Other Fairy Poems*, ill. by Boris Artzybasheff. Macmillan, 1928, o.p. Poems by Allingham, Walter de la Mare, and Matthew Arnold. 9-12
- , *Robin Redbreast and Other Verses*, ill. by Kate Greenaway, Helen Allingham, Caroline Paterson, and Harry Furness. Macmillan, Little Library, 1930, o.p. 7-12
- See discussion, p. 177.
- AUSTIN, MARY. *The Children Sing in the Far West*. Houghton, 1928, o.p. See discussion, p. 152. 8-12
- BARUCH, DOROTHY. *I Like Automobiles*, Ray, 1931, o.p.
- , *I Like Machinery*. Harper, 1933, o.p. See discussion, p. 156. 4-6
- BIRN, HARRY. *The Little Hill*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1949.
- , *Windy Morning*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1953.
- , *The Wizard in the Wall*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1953.
- See discussion, p. 150. 5-9
- BINET, ROSEMARY CARR and STEPHEN VINCENT. *A Book of Americans*, rev. ed., ill. by Charles Child Rinehart, 1952. See discussion, p. 123. 8-14
- BLAKE, WILLIAM. *Land of Dreams*, ill. by Pamela Bianco. Macmillan, 1928, o.p.
- , *Songs of Innocence*, ill. by Jacynth Parsons. Hale, 1927, o.p.
- See discussion, p. 162. 6—
- BROOKE, L. LESLIE. *Johnny Crow's Garden*. Warne, 1935.
- , *Johnny Crow's New Garden*. Warne, 1935.
- , *Johnny Crow's Party*. Warne, 1907. 3-7
- , *Leslie Brooke's Children's Books*, 4 vols. Warne, n.d. 5-12
- , *Ring o' Roses* (see Bibliography, Chapter 3).
- BROOKS, GWENDOLYN. *Bronzeville Boys and Girls*, ill. by Ronni Solbert. Harper, 1956. A talented young Negro poet has written these thirty-four poems which speak for all children who live and play in crowded areas of large cities. They are sometimes gay but often thoughtful or even a little sad. Poems and pictures interpret sincerely children's fun, confusions, and wonderment. 7-11
- CARROLL, LEWIS. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (see Bibliography, Chapter 13). See discussion, p. 110.
- COATSWORTH, ELIZABETH. *Away Goes Sally* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- , *The Fair American* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- , *Five Bushel Farm* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- , *Mouse Chorus*, ill. by Genevieve Vaughan-Jackson. Pantheon, 1955. Mostly mouse and not up to the author's best but worth looking over for a few choice verses. 4-6
- See discussion, p. 172.
- CONKLING, HILDA. *Poems by a Little Girl*, ill. by James Chapin. Stokes, 1920, o.p.
- , *Shoes of the Wind*. Stokes, 1922. See discussion, p. 175. 6-10
- DE LA MARE, WALTER. *Rhymes and Verses Collected Poems for Children*, ill. by Elinore Blaisdell. Holt, 1947. See discussion, p. 180. 5—
- EASTWICK, IVY. *Fairies and Suchlike*, ill. by Decie Merwin. Dutton, 1946, o.p. This book should not have gone out of print. The author has a true lyric gift, her fairy lore is authentic, and her nature poems have unusual charm. 5-12
- EDEY, MARION. *Open the Door*, ill. by Dorothy Grider. Scribner, 1949, o.p. The outdoor world pleasantly recorded for young children in a small book of lilting verse. 5-10
- FARJEON, ELEANOR. *Eleanor Farjeon's Poems for Children*. Lippincott, 1951. 5-12
- , *Prayer for Little Things*, ill. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Houghton, 1945. 5-12
- , *Mighty Alen*, ill. by Hugh Chesterman. Appleton, 1926. 10-12
- FARJEON, ELEANOR and HERBERT. *Kings and Queens*, rev. ed., ill. by Rosalind Thornycroft. Lippincott, 1955.
- See discussions, pp. 121 and 138. 10-12
- FIELD, EUGENE. *Poems of Childhood*, ill. by Maxfield Parrish. Scribner, 1904. See discussion, p. 124. 8-12
- FIELD, RACHYL. *A Little Book of Days*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1927, o.p.
- , *The Pointed People*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1930, o.p.
- , *Taxis and Toadstools*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1926.
- See discussion, p. 146. 7-12
- FISHER, AILEEN. *Up the Windy Hill*. Abelard, 1953.
- See discussion, p. 152. 5-8



- FROST, FRANCES MARY. *The Little Whistler*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Whittlesey House (McGraw), 1949. The quality of these verses is uneven, but the title poem and the poems of the four seasons are delightful. 5-9
- FYLEMAN, ROSE. *Fairies and Chimneys*. Doubleday, 1920, o.p. 7-12
- . *Fairies and Friends*. Doubleday, 1926, o.p. 7-12
- . *Fairy Flute*. Doubleday, 1923, o.p. 7-12
- . *Fairy Green*. Doubleday, 1923, o.p. 7-12
- . *Picture Rhymes from Foreign Lands*, ill. by Valery Carrick. Stokes, 1935, o.p. 5-12
- . *Pipe and Drum*. Stokes, 1940, o.p. 7-12
- See discussions, pp. 121 and 178.
- GAY, ZHENYA. *Jingle Jangle*, ill. by author. Viking, 1953. 3-5
- . *Look*, ill. by author. Viking, 1952. 3-5
- . *What's Your Name?* ill. by author. Viking, 1955. 2-5
- See discussion, p. 152.
- GILBERT, W. S., and ARTHUR SULLIVAN. *A Treasury of Gilbert and Sullivan*, ed. by Deems Taylor, music arr. by Albert Sirmay, ill. by Lucille Corcos. Simon & Schuster, 1941, o.p. Words and music of 102 songs from eleven operettas. 10-16
- GREENAWAY, KATE. *Marigold Garden*, ill. by author. Warne, 1910. 4-7
- . *Under the Window*, ill. by author. Warne, 1910. 4-7
- See discussion, p. 130.
- JAQUES, FLORENCE PAGE. *There Once Was a Puffin*, ill. by Frances Lee Jaques. Sanbornville, N.H.: Wake-Brook House, 1956. The long-popular "There Once Was a Puffin" and "Gobblinade" are included in this choice little book of fifteen nonsense verses. Each one is exquisitely illustrated and the flowered chintz binding is as gay as the verse. 5-10
- LEAR, EDWARD. *The Complete Nonsense Book*, ed. by Constance, Lady Strachey. Dodd, 1942. This volume includes both books referred to in the text. *The Book of Nonsense* and *Nonsense Songs and Stories*. These are available in the original attractive separate volumes from Warne. 8-14
- . *Nonsense Book*, sel. and ill. by Tony Palazzo. Garden City Bks., 1956. For this companion volume to his handsome edition of Aesop's fables, Mr. Palazzo has selected one of the nonsense alphabets, eight long narrative jingles, and some of the best of the limericks. The colored pictures are gay and lively. 3—
- See discussion, p. 105.
- LINDSAY, VACHEL. *Johnny Appleseed, and Other Poems*, ill. by George Richards. Macmillan, 1928. 10—
- See discussion, p. 122.
- MCCORD, DAVID. *Far and Few; Rhymes of the Never Was and Always Is*, ill. by Henry B. Kane. Little, 1952. See discussion, p. 125. 5-10
- MCGINLEY, PHYLLIS. *All Around the Town* (see Bibliography, Chapter 4).
- MILNE, A. A. *Now We Are Six*, ill. by Ernest Shepard. Dutton, 1927. 5-10
- . *When We Were Very Young*, ill. by Ernest Shepard. Dutton, 1924. 5-10
- See discussion, p. 116.
- NOYES, ALFRED. *Daddy Fell into the Pond, and Other Poems for Children*, ill. by Fritz Kredel. Sheed, 1952. After the hilarity of the first poem, this small collection reflects the world of nature and child activities. Its British flavor makes it difficult for average children. 6—
- RICHARDS, LAURA E. *Terra Litra; Rhymes Old and New*, ill. by Marguerite Davis, foreword by May Hill Arbuthnot. Little, 1955. See discussion, p. 111. 5-12
- RILEY, JAMES WHITCOMB. *Rhymes of Childhood*. Bobbs, 1900, o.p. See discussion, p. 124. 7-10
- ROBERTS, ELIZABETH MADOX. *Under the Tree*, ill. by F. D. Bedford. Viking, 1922. See discussion, p. 141. 6-10
- ROSSETTI, CHRISTINA. *Sing-Song*, ill. by Marguerite Davis. Macmillan, Little Library, 1924. See discussion, p. 167. 4-10
- SANDBURG, CARL. *Early Moon*, ill. by James Daugherty. Harcourt, 1930. See discussion, p. 154. 10-14
- SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM. *Under the Greenwood Tree, Songs from the Plays*, ed. by Julia Louise Reynolds, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Oxford, 1940. See discussion, p. 161. 6—
- SMITH, WILLIAM JAY. *Laughing Time*, ill. by Juliet Kepes. Little, 1955. See discussion, p. 126. 4—
- STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS. *A Child's Garden of Verses*. There are many editions of this classic. These are representative.
- . *Little Ann and Other Poems*, ill. by Kate Greenaway. Doane. Garden City Bks., 1942, o.p. Only 23 of the poems but bright colorful pictures. 4-19
- . *Just So Stories*, ill. by Jessie Wilcox Smith. Scribner, 1934. A large book with appealing pictures in soft colors.
- . *Under the Greenwood Tree*, ill. by Tasha Tudor. Oxford, 1947. A full edition with pictures in soft pastels using the young Robert Louis himself as the child. 4-19
- TAYLOR, ANN and JANE, and ADELAIDE OYSTER. *The "Original Poems" and Others*, ed. by E. V. Lucas, ill. by F. D. Bedford. London: Wells, Gardner, Dutton, and Stokes, 1905, o.p. A distinguished modern edition, containing a biographical sketch of the sisters.
- . *Little Ann and Other Poems*, ill. by Kate Greenaway. Warne, n.d., o.p. 4-19
- See discussion, p. 129.
- TEASDALE, SARA. *Start To-night*, ill. by Dorothy Lamb. Macmillan, 1930. See discussion, p. 171. 2-12
- TIPPETT, JAMES. *I Go A-Traveling*, ill. by Elizabeth T. Wolcott. Harper, 1929, o.p. 2-12
- . *I Know Some Little Animals*, ill. by Elizabeth Nash De Muth. Harper, 1941, o.p. 2-12
- . *I Live in a City*, ill. by Elizabeth T. Wolcott. Harper, 1927, o.p. 2-12
- . *I Spend the Summer*, ill. by Elizabeth T. Wolcott. Harper, 1930, o.p. 2-12
- See discussion, p. 156.
- TURNER, NANCY BYRD. *Martin Lane*, ill. by Ernest Merwin. Harcourt, 1927, o.p. This charming book with its equally fetching illustrations has been out of print. But many of its best verses are found in modern anthologies. See *Index* for 1901. See discussion, p. 163. 5—
- WATTS, ISAAC. *Disney Songs for Children*, 1901. See discussion, p. 163. 5—

- WELLES, WINIFRED. *Skippping Along Alone*, ill. by Marguerite Davis. Macmillan, 1931, o.p. See discussion, p. 144. 7-10
- WYNNE, ANNETTE. *All Through the Year, Three Hundred and Sixty Five New Poems for Holidays and Every Day*. Stokes, 1932. 6-10
- . *For Days and Days: A Year Round Treasury of Verse*. Stokes, 1919. 8-10
- See discussion, p. 156.

## Biographies of poets

- AUSLANDER, JOSEPH, and FRANK ERNEST HILL. *The Winged Horse; The Story of Poets and Their Poetry*. Doubleday, 1927. Written for older children and young people, this is a thoroughly interesting book for teachers and parents as well.
- BALFOUR, GRAHAM. *The Life of Robert Louis Stevenson*. Scribner, 1915, o.p.
- BARNES, WALTER. *The Children's Poets*. World Book Co., 1924, o.p. Chapter I, "Children's Poetry and Children's Poets," should not be missed.
- . "Contemporary Poetry for Children." *The Elementary English Review*, January 1936, 13.3. See the continuation of these articles throughout the year.
- BENÉY, LAURA. "Rachel Field: A Memory." *Horn Book*, July-August 1942, 18.227.
- DAVIDSON, ANGUS. *Eduard Lear, Landscape Painter and Non-Sense Poet*. Dutton, 1939, o.p.
- FARJEON, ELEANOR. *Portrait of a Family*. Stokes, 1936, o.p.
- FIELD, ISOBEL. *This Life I've Loved*. Longmans, 1937. About Robert Louis Stevenson, by his stepdaughter.
- LENNON, FLORENCE BECKER. *Victoria Through the Looking Glass*. Simon & Schuster, 1945, o.p. A fine biography of Lewis Carroll.
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FARJEON, ELEANOR. "In the Week When Christmas Comes." *Eleanor Farjeon's Poems for Children*, *Time for Poetry*.

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**Dialogue and antiphonal**

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—, "Swift things are beautiful." P. 173

—, "Who are you?" asked the cat of the bear." *Time for Poetry*.

EDEY, MARION. "The Little Fox." P. 228

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 MILLAY, EDNA ST. VINCENT. "Wonder Where This Horseshoe Went?" *Poems Selected for Young People, Time for Poetry*  
 MILLER, JOAQUIN. "Columbus." *Time for Poetry*  
 MILNE, A. A. "Puppy and I." *When We Were Very Young, Time for Poetry*  
 MITCHELL, LUCY SPRAGUE. "It Is Raining." *Time for Poetry*  
 MONRO, HAROLD. "Overheard on a Saltmarsh." *Time for Poetry*  
 MOTHER GOOSE. "Bell horses." *Time for Poetry*  
 ———. "Blow wind, blow." *Time for Poetry*  
 ———. "Bow, wow, wow!" *Time for Poetry*  
 ———. "Is John Smith within?" P. 216  
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 ———. "The North Wind doth blow."  
 ———. "Old woman, old woman, shall we go a-shearing?" *Time for Poetry*  
 ———. "Pussy-cat, pussy-cat." *Time for Poetry*  
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 ———. "Who has seen the wind?" P. 169, *Sing Song*  
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 ———. "Earth and Sky" *Eleanor Farjeon's Poems for Children*  
 MORRIS, WILLIAM. "Carol" *Welcome Christmas!*  
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 SIMPSON, EDITH. "The Ox and the Ass." *Welcome Christmas!*  
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 ABBEY, HENRY. "What do we plant?" *Time for Poetry*  
 BEYER, EVELYN. "Jump or Jiggle." *Time for Poetry*  
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 ———. "I won't be my father's Jack."  
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 WHITMAN, WALT. "I Hear America Singing." *Leaves of Grass, Time for Poetry*  
 WORDSWORTH, WILLIAM. "My Heart Leaps Up." *Time for Poetry*  
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 ———. "Stop-Go" P. 157  
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 BENÉT, ROSEMARY and STEPHEN. "Abraham Lincoln" *Book of Americans, Time for Poetry*  
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———. "Sleepyhead." P. 183; *Rhymes and Verses for Children.*

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GREEN, MARY MCB. "Acroplane." *Time for Poetry.*

GUITERMAN, ARTHUR. "The Pioneer." *Time for Poetry.*

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HUGHES, LANGSTON. "African Dance." P. 221; *The Dream Keeper.*

KIPLING, RUDYARD. "Seal Lullaby." *Collected Poems, An Inheritance of Poetry.*

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MILNE, A. A. "The Christening." *When We Were Very Young.*

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———. "Market Square." *When We Were Very Young.*

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———. "The Monkeys and the Crocodile" *Tirra Tirra, Time for Poetry.*

RICHARDS, LAURA. "Little John Bottlejohn." P. 113; *Tirra Tirra.*

STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS. "Where Go the Boats." P. 137; *A Child's Garden of Verses*

———. "The Wind." P. 137; *A Child's Garden of Verses.*

———. "Windy Nights" P. 136, *A Child's Garden of Verses*

UNKNOWN. "The Crafty Farmer." *Time for Poetry.*

———. "Get Up and Bar the Door." P. 89

———. "The Squirrel." *Time for Poetry.*

WOLFE, FRIDA. "Choosing Shoes." *Time for Poetry.*

### Group work: Christmas

HERRICK, ROBERT. "Ceremonies for Christmas" *Time for Poetry.*

REESE, LIZETTE W. "A Christmas Folk-Song." *Time for Poetry.*

### Unison

AUSLANDER, JOSEPH. "A Blackbird Suddenly." *Time for Poetry.*

BEHN, HARRY. "This Happy Day." *Little Hill, Time for Poetry*

COATSWORTH, ELIZABETH. "He who has never known hunger." P. 174, *The Fair American.*

CONKLING, HILDA. "Loveliness" *Shoes of the Wind, Time for Poetry.*

DE LA MARE, WALTER. "The Horseman" P. 160, *Rhymes and Verses for Children.*

———. "Some One." P. 181; *Rhymes and Verses for Children.*

DRISCOLL, LOUISE. "Hold Fast Your Dreams." *Time for Poetry.*

FARJEON, ELEANOR. "Down! Down!" *Eleanor Farjeon's Poems for Children, Time for Poetry.*

———. "Mrs Peck-Pigeon." P. 140, *Eleanor Farjeon's Poems for Children*

GREENAWAY, KATE. "Little wind, blow on the hill-top." *Under the Window, Time for Poetry.*

GUTHRIE, JAMES. "Last Song." *Time for Poetry.*

———. "Wisdom." *Time for Poetry.*

HUGHES, LANGSTON. "Heaven" *Dream Keeper, Time for Poetry*

HUGO, VICTOR. "Be Like the Bird" *Time for Poetry.*

———. "Good Night" P. 221

JACKSON, LEROY I. "Hippity Hop to Bed." *Time for Poetry.*

KIKURIÖ. "Daffodils" (Japanese *hokku*). *Time for Poetry*

MASEFIELD, JOHN. "Sea Fever." *Story of a Round House, Time for Poetry.*

MILNE, A. A. "Happiness." *When We Were Very Young, Time for Poetry.*

———. "Hoppity." *When We Were Very Young, Time for Poetry.*

MOTHER GOOSE. "Daffadowndilly." P. 63

———. "Higgledy, piggledy." *Time for Poetry.*

———. "I had a little nut tree" P. 65

———. "Master I have" P. 212

———. "One misty moony morning" *Time for Poetry.*

———. "Rain, rain, go away." *Time for Poetry.*

———. "Wee Willie Winkie." *Time for Poetry.*

ROBERTS, ELIZABETH MADOX. "Firefly." P. 143; *Under the Tree*

SCOTT, SIR WALTER. "Heap on more wood." *Time for Poetry.*

SHERMAN, FRANK DEMPSTER. "The Snowbird" *Time for Poetry*

SILBERGER, JULIUS. "A Reply to Nancy Hanks" *Time for Poetry.*

STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS. "Happy Thought" *A Child's Garden of Verses, Time for Poetry.*

### Unison: Christmas

UNKNOWN. "Bethlehem" *Welcome Christmas!*

## Chapter 11 Old magic

### Adult references

AFANASIEV, ALEXANDER A. *Russian Fairy Tales*, tr. by Norbert Guterman, ill. by A. Alexeeff Pantheon Bks., 1945, o.p. See the valuable "Folkloristic Commentary" by Roman Jakobson

ANDREWS, ELIZABETH. *Ulster Folklore* Dutton, 1919, o.p. Here are all the historical ramifications of the theory that fairy dwellers in raths and mounds are survivors of an inferior race.

ARBUETHNOT, MAY HILL. *Time for Fairy Tales Old and New*, ill. by John Averill and others Scott, 1952. A large collection of favorite folk tales, fables, myths, epics, and modern fanciful tales with introductions concerning their origins, history, and uses. Also included in *The Arbutnot Anthology*.

ASBJÖRNSEN, PETER CHRISTIAN, and JØRGEN MOE.

- Popular Tales from the Norse*, tr. by Sir George Webbe Dasent. Putnam, n.d., o.p. A long and rich introduction by the translator is particularly good on changes from myth to fairy tale.
- . *Tales from the Field*, tr. by Sir George Webbe Dasent, ill. by Mervin Smith. Putnam, 1908, o.p. A source book found only in large libraries.
- BENEDICT, RUTH. "Folklore." *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, 6. pages 288-293. A leading student of world cultures discusses and criticizes theories of folklore. An excellent exposition of the modern anthropological and psychological theories.
- BETT, HENRY. *Nursery Rhymes and Tales*. Holt, 1924, o.p. A comparative study of nursery rhymes and folk tales of many countries, tracing their origins to ancient customs, myths, and rituals.
- BOTKIN, BENJAMIN A., ed. *A Treasury of American Folklore*. Crown, 1944. A valuable source for students interested in our native variants of European ballads and tales and our own American tall tale inventions.
- BUNCE, JOHN THACKERY. *Fairy Tales, Their Origin and Meaning*. London: Macmillan, 1878, o.p. Based on the discredited theory of Aryan origin but interesting because it traces the parallels of such universal themes as Eros and Cupid from the *Metamorphoses*, nearly 2000 years ago, back to still older Sanskrit sacred books and on down to the Norse "East of the Sun" and many others.
- COLUM, PADRAIC, ed. *A Treasury of Irish Folklore*. Crown, 1954. This book gives insight into Irish history and heroism as well as folklore.
- COX, MARIAN ROALFE. *Cinderella, Three Hundred and Forty-Five Variants*. Published for the Folk Lore Society by Nutt, 1893, o.p. Marian Cox has pursued the story of "Cinderella" through some forty-three countries and peoples.
- CRIMM, JACOB and WILHELM. *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, tr. by Margaret Hunt, rev. by James Stern, ill. by Josef Scharl. Pantheon Bks., 1944, o.p. The "introduction" by Padraic Colum and "Folkloristic Commentary" by Joseph Campbell are important contributions.
- . *Popular Stories*, tr. by Edgar Taylor, ill. by George Cruikshank, a reprint of the first English edition. London. Clowes, 1913. This edition is interesting to adults as a reproduction of the first English translation of the Grimm tales with matchless Cruikshank illustrations.
- HALLIDAY, WILLIAM REGINALD. "Folklore." *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1945), 9.446-447. Gives a brief definition and history of the science of folklore, with special reference to the folk tale. Explains clearly the various important theories of folk-tale origin, with the exception of the modern theories developed by social anthropologists and psychologists.
- HARTLAND, EDWIN SIDNEY. *The Science of Fairy Tales*. Stokes, n.d., o.p. This, a tribute to the storytellers whose art has preserved the fairy tales, pursues the origins discussion further. It takes exception to the idea that fairies grew out of the survival of an inferior race.
- HAZARD, PAUL. *Books, Children and Men* (see Bibliography, Chapter 2). Perrault is discussed on pp. 5-10; the Grimm brothers on pp. 152-157; and fairy tales on pp. 157-161.
- JACOBS, JOSEPH. See listings in other sections of Bibliography, Chapter 10. His collections of English, Celtic, and Indian folk tales contain significant introductions, and the notes in each appendix are treasures of folklore information.
- KEIGHTLEY, THOMAS. *The Fairy Mythology*. London: Bell, 1892, o.p. A fascinating account of the fairies and fairy lore of many countries and times, illustrated with tales recorded from the people.
- KRAPPE, ALEXANDER HAGGERTY. *The Science of Folk Lore* (see Bibliography, Chapter 5). This book covers various types of folk literature, evaluates theories of origin and content, and analyzes motives.
- LANG, ANDREW. *Custom and Myth*. Longmans, first printed in 1884, o.p. An early study of "the oldest stories" by a brilliant folklorist.
- . *Myth, Ritual and Religion*, 2 vols., Longmans, first printed in 1887, o.p. The author traces the wilder and more abhorrent elements in myth and folk tales to their origin in or survival from savagery or barbarism. Chapter XIX, "Heroic and Romantic Myths," discusses the nursery tales.
- RANK, OTTO. *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero: A Psychological Interpretation of Mythology*, trans. by F. Robbins and Smith Ely Jelliffe. Brunner, 1952. A classic exposition of the connection between the form of myths and the unconscious emotions of the child. Studies the myths of the birth of the hero from Moses to Odysseus, interpreting each myth in terms of the Oedipus complex.
- (Note: T. Crofton Croker printed his *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* in 1825, but finer collections were made by Patrick Kennedy, a Dublin bookseller whose *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* was published in 1866 and followed by two more collections in 1867 and 1869. Kennedy's notes prefacing the tales are invaluable for students of Irish folklore, but unfortunately his books have been allowed to go out of print. Lady Wilde's *Ancient Legends of Ireland*, 1887, is a good source for adult students of folklore.)

## Collections of tales

### African and Ethiopian

- COURLANDER, HAROLD, and GEORGE HERZOG. *The Cow-Tail Switch, and Other West African Stories*, ill. by Madye Lee Chastain. Holt, 1947. Seventeen tales of West Africa, told in lively style and revealing much about the customs of the people and how they live. 10-12
- COURLANDER, HAROLD, and WOLF LESLAU. *The Fire on the Mountain and Other Ethiopian Stories*, ill. by Robert W. Kane. Holt, 1950. Outstanding in style, illustrations, and content. 10-14
- ELLIOT, GERALDINE. *The Long Grass Whispers*, ill. by Sheila Hawkins. Putnam, 1939. These tales from Central Africa are reminiscent of both Aesop's fables and Uncle Remus. 8-10
- KALIBALA, ERNEST, and MARY GOULD DAVIS. *Wukama and the Clay Man, and Other African Folktales*, ill. by Avery Johnson. Longmans, 1946.



- Tales with strong moral implications, from the Boganda tribes of East Africa. 10-12
- RICKERT, EDITH. *The Bojabi Tree*, ill. by Gleb Botkin. Doubleday, 1923. Humorous repetitive tale of the hungry jungle animals who at last earned the right to eat the fruit of the bojabi tree. 7-9
- SHERLOCK, PHILIP MANDERSON. *Anansi, the Spider Alan*, ill. by Marcia Brown. Crowell, 1954. These stories, told by Jamaicans, had their roots in African folklore. They are told with simplicity and charm. 9-12

## Arabian

- The Arabian Nights*, ill. by Earle Goodenow. Grosset, 1946. An attractive and inexpensive edition. 10-14
- BROWN, MARCIA. *The Flying Carpet*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1956. This story, so much a part of our language and so difficult to find, has been beautifully retold and illustrated by the gifted artist, Marcia Brown. 6-10
- COLUM, PADRAIC, ed. *The Arabian Nights: Tales of Wonder and Magnificence*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Macmillan, 1953. Republished after thirty years in a new and attractive edition, this outstanding collection will appeal to younger readers. 10-14
- LANG, ANDREW, ed. *Arabian Nights*, ill. by Vera Bock. Longmans, 1946. Fine black-and-white drawings and large print make this a favorite edition for children's reading. 10-14
- A *Thousand and One Nights*, ill. by Milo Winter. Rand McNally, 1914, o.p. A good school edition, well illustrated and adapted for children. 10-14
- WIGGIN, KATE DOUGLAS, and NORA SMITH, eds. *Arabian Nights, Their Best Known Tales*, ill. by Maxfield Parrish. Scribner, 1909. Here are the favorite stories—"Aladdin," "Ali Baba," "The Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor"—gorgeously illustrated in color, and well told. 10-14

## Chinese

- BISHOP, CLAIRE. *The Five Chinese Brothers*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Coward, 1938. This Chinese version of five brothers, each with a special magical gift, has been a universal favorite ever since it appeared. 5-10
- CARPENTER, FRANCES. *Tales of a Chinese Grandmother*, ill. by Malthé Hasseluis. Doubleday, 1937. The "Grandmother" series for different racial groups is a reliable source, with many good stories. 9-12
- CHIAN, CHIH-YI and PLATO. *The Good-Luck Horse*. McGraw, 1943. Legend of the little paper horse that came alive and brought good fortune to its small owner. 6-8
- HSI YU CHI. *The Adventures of Monkey*, ill. by Kurt Wiese, adapted from the Chinese by Arthur Waley. Day, 1944. Monkey is the traditional Chinese Mickey Mouse—adventurous, impudent, and curious. Driven by the desire to live forever, he seeks wisdom, but never in a humble frame of mind. His antics and magic are good fun but decidedly intellectual. 12-16
- LIM, SIANG-TEK. *Folk Tales from China*, ill. by William Arthur Smith Day, 1944. An excellent selection of folk and legendary tales.

- , *More Folk Tales from China*, ill. by William Arthur Smith Day, 1948. 12-16
- METZGER, BERTA. *Picture Tales from the Chinese*, ill. by Eleanor F. Latimore. Lippincott, 1934. Following the usual "Picture Tales" pattern, these stories are for younger children than the others. 7-10
- RITCHIE, ALICE. *The Treasures of Li-Po*, ill. by T. Ritchie. Harcourt, 1949. These six original fairy tales are told with all the sincerity and dignity of the folk tales which they resemble. 10-14

## Czechoslovakian

- FILLMORE, PARKER, ed. *The Shoemaker's Apron*, ill. by Jan Matulka. Harcourt, 1920. Parker Fillmore has retold rather than translated these tales from the great collections of Erben and Nemcova. 9-12

## Danish

- HATCH, MARY COTTAM. *13 Danish Tales, Retold*, ill. by Edgum [pseud.]. Harcourt, 1947. These stories are excellent for reading or storytelling, and are carefully adapted from the Bay translation. 9-13
- , *More Danish Tales, Retold*, ill. by Edgum [pseud.]. Harcourt, 1949. 9-13

## English, Scottish, and Welsh

- BROWN, MARCIA. *Dick Whittington and His Cat*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1950. A lovely, readable adaptation of this classic hero tale with strong linoleum cuts in two colors. 4-8
- JACOBS, JOSEPH, ed. *English Fairy Tales*, ill. by John D. Batten. Putnam, n.d.
- , *More English Fairy Tales*, ill. by John D. Batten. Putnam, n.d.
- These are not only reliable sources for the favorite English tales, but are also appealing to children in format and illustrations. 9-12
- JONES, GWYN. *Welsh Legends and Folk Tales*, ill. by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1955. Retellings of ancient sagas as well as folk and fairy tales are included. Illustrations in color are particularly outstanding. 11-14
- REEVES, JAMES. *English Fables and Fairy Stories*, ill. by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1954. An attractive collection of nineteen tales illustrated in two colors. 10-14
- STEELE, FLORA ANNIE. *English Fairy Tales*, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Macmillan, 1918. The American edition of this book is smaller and not so beautiful as the English edition. However, both are illumined by the imaginative and subtle pictures of Rackham and the excellent adaptations of Mrs. Steele. All the favorites are here. 8-12
- TREGARTHEN, ENYS. *Puskey Folk, A Book of Cornish Legends*, Day, 1940. A rare collection for the storyteller, full of the pranks of the puskeys. 8-12
- , *The White Ring*, ed. by Elizabeth Yates, ill. by Nora S. Unwin. Harcourt, 1949. An exquisite Celtic fairy tale about Cornish faeries. To be read aloud. 7-12
- WILSON, BARBARA KER. *Scottish Folk Tales and Legends*, ill. by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1954. In addition to the folk tales, a section of stories on the legendary exploits of the Fians is included. Attractive format and illustrations. 11-14

## Eskimo

- GILLHAM, CHARLES EDWARD. *Beyond the Clapping Mountains: Eskimo Stories from Alaska*, ill. by Chanumum. Macmillan, 1943. Illustrated by an Eskimo girl, these are unusual and highly imaginative tales. 10-12

## Filipino

- SECHRIST, ELIZABETH H. *Once in the First Times; Folk Tales From the Philippines*, ill. by John Sheppard Macrae-Smith Co., 1949. This small book includes fifty Filipino folk tales—"why" stories, tales of the creation, legends, hero tales, and romances. 8-12

## Finnish

- BOWMAN, JAMES CLOYD, and MARGERY BIANCO. *Tales from a Finnish Tapa*, from a tr. by Aili Kolehmainen, ill. by Laura Bannon. A. Whitman, 1936 Here are the everyday folk tales of the Finnish people, not the epic stories Beautifully told, with effective illustrations. 10-14

## French

- DOUGLAS, BARBARA, comp. *Favorite French Fairy Tales, Retold from the French of Perrault, Madame D'Aulnoy, and Madame Le Prince de Beaumont*, ill. by R. Cramer. Dodd, 1952. "Beauty and the Beast" and "Prince Darling" by Mme. de Beaumont, and "The White Cat" and "Goldenlocks" by Mme. D'Aulnoy are included with the Perrault tales 9-12
- *All the French Fairy Tales*, retold by Louis Untermeyer, ill. by Gustave Doré Didier Pubs., 1946. The reproduction of the superb Doré illustrations makes this edition a notable one 9-12
- *Cinderella, or The Little Glass Slipper*, ill. by Marcia Brown Scribner, 1954 The attractive pastel illustrations won this fairy tale picture-book the Caldecott award in 1955. (See note on authorship of Perrault's tales, p. 43) 5-9
- *French Fairy Tales*, retold by Louis Untermeyer, ill. by Gustave Doré Didier Pubs., 1945 8-12
- *Puss in Boots*, ill. by Marcia Brown Scribner, 1952 Wonderful pictures enliven this story of the faithful cat who helps to make a lord of his poor young master. 6-9
- PERRAULT, CHARLES, and MME. D'AULNOY *Fairy Tales*, ill. by Charles Robinson Dutton, 1916, o.p. Besides Perrault's eight tales this contains "The Benevolent Frog" and "Princess Rosette" by Mme. D'Aulnoy 9-12
- PICARD, BARBARA. *French Legends, Tales and Fairy Stories Retold*, ill. by Joan Kiddell Montrose Oxford, 1955 A rich and varied source of folklore ranging from epic literature to medieval tales, from legends to fairy tales 10-14
- POURCAT, HENRI, ed. *A Treasury of French Tales*, tr. by Mary Mian, ill. by Pauline Baynes. Houghton, 1954 A collection of over forty tales told with vitality and humor. 10-14

## German

- GRIMM, JACOB and WILHELM. *Gone is Gone*, retold and ill. by Wanda Gág. Coward McCann, 1935.

Lively retelling of the old tale about the man and wife who exchanged household duties for a day. 6-8

- *Tales from Grimm*, freely tr. and ill. by Wanda Gág. Coward McCann, 1936

- *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, freely tr. and ill. by Wanda Gág Coward-McCann, 1938.

- *Three Gay Tales from Grimm*, tr. and ill. by Wanda Gág. Coward-McCann, 1943.

Wanda Gág heard these stories as a child. She has adapted them for telling exactly as any good storyteller does when he has children for an audience. The narration is lively, natural, and simple. So are the illustrations. Both text and pictures preserve the folk flavor of the tales, and children feel at once that these books belong to them. 8-12

- *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Pantheon (see Adult references).

- *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, tr. by Mrs. E. V. Lucas, Lucy Crane, and Marian Edwards, ill. by Fritz Kredel. Grosset, 1945. An edition that is thoroughly satisfactory to children. The excellent translation is supplemented by bright, appealing pictures. 9-12

- *Grimm's Tales*, ill. by Helen Sewell and Madeleine Gekiere. Oxford, 1954. Fine format and distinctive modern illustrations characterize this collection of sixteen tales. 10-12

- *The House in the Wood and Other Old Fairy Stories*, ill. by L. Leslie Brooke. Warne, 1910. The stories in this collection are not always the best known, but the illustrations are in Leslie Brooke's gayest style. 8-12

- *Household Stories from the Collection of the Brothers Grimm*, tr. by Lucy Crane, ill. by Johannes Troyer. Macmillan, 1954. Thirty-two favorite tales are included in this attractive, large-print edition. 10-12

- *The Traveling Musician*, ill. by Hans Fischer. Harcourt, 1955. Distinctive illustrations in color make this an outstanding folk tale picture book. 5-8

## India

- BABBITT, ELLIN C. *The Jataka Tales*, ill. by Ellsworth Young. Appleton, 1912.

- *More Jataka Tales*, ill. by Ellsworth Young. Appleton, 1912.

Out of print, but available in large libraries. These are valuable sources of East Indian fables. 6-10

- JACOBS, JOSEPH, ed. *Indian Fairy Tales*, ill. by J. D. Batten. Putnam, 1892 Like Jacobs' other collections, these stories are selected from manuscript sources. They also throw light on fable and folk-tale origins. 9-12

- METZGER, BERTA. *Picture Tales from India*, ill. by Mina Buchanan. Lippincott, 1942. Simplicity of the telling makes this a useful collection for younger readers. 8-10

## Irish

- BENNETT, RICHARD *Little Dermot and the Thirsty Stones, and Other Irish Folk Tales*, ill. by Richard Bennett. Coward McCann, 1953 Eight lively tales with appeal for younger readers. The title story is especially good for storytelling. 9-12

COLUM, PADRAIC. *The Big Tree of Bunlaby*, ill. by Jack Yeats. Macmillan, 1933. This collection from one of our most successful adapters of myths gives the storytelling background of each tale. "Our Hen," the two stories about "King Cormac's Cup," and "The Man with the Bag" are perhaps the best for telling. 8-12

JACOBS, JOSEPH, ed. *Celtic Fairy Tales*, ill. by John D. Batten. Putnam, 1893.

—, *More Celtic Fairy Tales*, ill. by John D. Batten. Putnam, n.d.

JACOBS includes Welsh, Scotch, Cornish, and Irish in his two Celtic collections. His copious notes acknowledge sources, give parallels, and furnish much information concerning folklore background of the tales. 9-12

MACMANUS, SEUMAS. *The Bold Heroes of Hungry Hill and Other Irish Folk Tales*, ill. by Jay Chollack. Farrar, Strauss, 1951. Retellings of stories the author heard around the firesides of Donegal. Three other collections, now out of print but available in libraries, are: *Donegal Fairy Tales*, *Donegal Wonder Book*, and *In Chimney Corners*. 9-12

MASON, ARTHUR. *The Wee Men of Ballywooden*, ill. by Robert Lawson. Viking, 1952. Fairy tales the author remembers hearing as a child, these humorous and enchanting tales are enhanced by some of Robert Lawson's most delightful sketches. 10-14

O'FAOLAIN, EILEEN. *Irish Sagas and Folk-Tales*, ill. by Joan Kiddell-Monroe. Oxford, 1954. This distinguished collection contains epic tales and folk tales to delight both reader and storyteller. 10-14

### Italian

BOTSFORD, MRS FLORENCE H. *Picture Tales from the Italian*, ill. by Grace Gilkison Lippincott, 1929. These *Picture Tales* from various countries are uniform in size, format, and age appeal. The collections from Russia, Holland, France, Mexico, and Spain are planned for Grades 2 to 4. The nineteen Italian tales are amusing and are interspersed with short rhymed riddles. 7-10

### Japanese

UCHIDA, YOSHIKO. *The Dancing Kettle and Other Japanese Folk Tales*, retold, ill. by Richard C. Jones Harcourt, 1949. Fourteen Japanese folk tales, some of them familiar, many of them new, make this a welcome addition to folklore collections.

—, *The Magic Listening Cup, More Folk Tales from Japan*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1953. The author artist has illustrated this second collection with the distinctive simplicity characteristic of Japanese art. 9-12

### Korean

JEWETT, ELEANORE MYERS. *Which Was Witch? Tales of Ghosts and Magic from Korea*, ill. by Taro Yashima [pseud. for Jun Iwamasu]. Viking, 1953. Fourteen stories with sparkle and suspense, excellent for storytelling. 9-13

### Mexican and South American

BRENNER, ANITA. *The Boy Who Could Do Anything, and Other Mexican Folk Tales, Retold*, ill. by Jean

Charlot. W. R. Scott, 1942. These curious tales have an authentic ring. The line drawings have the stark simplicity of the stories. 8-12

FINGER, CHARLES J. *Tales from Silver Lands*, Doubleday, 1924. The author gathered these outstanding folk tales from the Indians during his South American travels. 10-14

HENIUS, FRANK, ed. *Stories from the Americas*, ill. by Leo Politi. Scribner, 1944. Twenty folk tales or legends which are favorites of the peoples in Mexico, Central and South America. 9-11

LOVELACE, MAUD and DELOS W. *The Golden Wedge*, ill. by Charlotte Anna Chase. Crowell, 1942. Myths and legends of the South American Indians which had their origin before the white man came. 10-14

STORM, DAN. *Picture Tales from Mexico*, ill. by Mark Storm. Lippincott, 1941. Nineteen stories, many of them animal tales involving the lion as well as the native coyotes and rabbits. 8-10

### Norwegian

ASBJORNSEN, PETER CHRISTIAN, and JORGEN MOE. *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, ill. by Hedvig Collin. Macmillan, 1933. A new and attractive edition of a title which appeared twenty-five years ago. Based on the Dasent translation. 10-14

—, *East of the Sun and West of the Moon*, ill. by Kay Nielsen. Doubleday, 1922. Fifteen favorite stories with highly imaginative illustrations. 10-14

JONES, GWYN. *Scandinavian Legends and Folk Tales*, ill. by Joan Kiddell Monroe. Oxford, 1956. Another Oxford contribution to folk-tale collections, this contains several of the familiar stories. Others are hero tales and unusual examples of folklore told with humor and impressive art. 8-12

THORNE-THOMSEN, GUDRUN. *East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon*, ill. by Frederick Richardson. Row, rev. ed. 1946. The stories are adapted from the original by a famous storyteller. 7-12

UNDET, SIGRID, ed. *True and Untrue and Other Norse Tales*, ill. by Frederick T. Chapman Knopf, 1945. A good collection for storytelling and for children's own reading. The author's foreword on the subject of folklore will appeal to the student. 10-13

### Russian

CARRICK, VALERY. *Picture Tales from the Russian*, tr. by Nevill Forbes Lippincott, 1913. Eleven little animal stories. 5-7

GRISHINA-GIVAGO, NADEJDA. *Peter Pea* Lippincott, 1926. This is the Russian Hop o' My Thumb—no bigger than a pea. He is adopted by a princess and has many amusing adventures in the palace. Finally he commands the princess to plant him. When she does, he grows into a handsome young man and they live happily ever after. A charming picture-story. 6-7

PAPASHVILY, GEORGE and HELEN. *Yes and No Stories: A Book of Georgian Folk Tales*, ill. by Simon Lissim. Harper, 1946, op. Tales of kings and peasants and animals that talk, told simply and in humorous vein. 9-12

PROKOFIEFF, SERGE. *Peter and the Wolf*, ill. by Wat-

- ren Chappell. Knopf, 1940. Delightful picture-book story about young Peter who outwitted the wolf to rescue the duck. Excerpts from the musical score accompany the text. 7-10
- RANSOME, ARTHUR. *Old Peter's Russian Tales*, ill. by Dmitri Mitrokin. Nelson, 1917. This is the teacher's most practical source for the Russian tales. They are in admirable style for telling or reading aloud, and lend themselves to dramatization. 8-12
- WHEELER, POST. *Russian Wonder Tales*, ill. by Bilibin. Beechhurst Press, Inc., 1946. Serving in diplomatic posts in various parts of the world, Post Wheeler gathered the folklore of the people. 11-14

## Spanish

- BOGGS, RALPH STEELE, and MARY GOULD DAVIS. *The Three Golden Oranges and Other Spanish Folk Tales*, ill. by Emma Brock. Longmans, 1936. Stories for older children, romantic and exciting. One remarkable ghost story. 10-12
- DAVIS, ROBERT. *Padre Porko*, ill. by Fritz Eichenberg. Holiday, 1948. Padre Porko, the gentlemanly pig, has all the benignance of the Buddha animals, and a certain mannerly elegance besides. Amusing tales, enhanced by good pen-and ink sketches. 8-12
- EELLS, ELSIE SPICER. *Tales of Enchantment from Spain*, ill. by Maud and Miska Petersham. Dodd, 1950. These are romantic tales, rich in magic. 10-14
- SAWYER, RUTH. *Picture Tales from Spain*, ill. by Carlos Sanchez Lippincott, 1936. Eleven little stories for children seven to ten years old, with rhymed riddles in between. Miss Sawyer has the ideal storytelling style. 7-10

## Swiss

- DUVOISIN, ROGER. *The Three Sneezes and Other Swiss Tales*, ill. by Knopf, 1941. Humorous tales, many of which are based on the theme of the stupid fellow who succeeds or is outwitted. 9-12

## United States: North American Indian

- BELL, CORYDON. *John Rattling Gourd of Big Cave: A Collection of Cherokee Indian Legends*, ill. by Corydon Bell. Macmillan, 1955. An outstanding collection of twenty-four legends, many of them about natural phenomena. Fine black-and-white illustrations. 10-14
- BROWN, EMILY. *A Ball for Little Bear*, ill. by Dick Mackay. Aladdin, 1955. How the world was rescued from darkness after Big Bear took the sun from the sky for Little Bear to play with.
- . *How Rabbit Stole Fire*, ill. by Jack Ferguson. Aladdin, 1954. A humorous Cherokee legend of how Rabbit stole sacred fire and gave it to the people. 7-10
- GRINNELL, GEORGE BIRD. *Blackfoot Lodge Tales*. Scribner, 1892. Authentic, unadapted tales, taken down from the tribal storytellers. 10-14
- MACFARLAN, ALLAN A. *Indian Adventure Tales: Tales of Trails and Tipis, Ponies and Paddles, Warriors and Warriors*, ill. by Paulette Jumeau and Bob Hofstede (Gray Wolf) Dodd, 1953. These stories offer more plot and action than many of the Indian folk tales. 11-14

- MACMILLAN, CYRUS. *Glooskap's Country, and Other Indian Tales*, ill. by John A. Hall. Oxford, 1956. First published in 1918 as *Canadian Wonder Tales*, this is one of the finest collections of Indian stories available. They range from simple "how" stories to complex and mystical tales of magic, superbly told and illustrated. 8-12

- MARTIN, FRANK. *Nine Tales of Coyote*, ill. by Dorothy McEntee. Harper, 1950. Authentic tales of Coyote, the animal Indian god. The stories are lively and have a quality of suspense. Illustrations are in color.

- . *Nine Tales of Raven*, ill. by Dorothy McEntee. Harper, 1951. These tales of the Northwest Coast Indians appear in attractive format. 8-11

- PENNEY, GRACE. *Tales of the Cheyennes*, ill. by Walter Richard West. Houghton, 1953. Long ago legends explaining nature and customs, and a group of humorous tales chiefly about the Indian, Whio, who liked to play tricks. 10-14

## United States: North American Negro

- DUNCAN, EULA G. *Big Road Walker*, ill. by Fritz Eichenberg. Lippincott, 1940. A recent collection of Negro tall tales as told to the author by Alice Cannon. Big Road Walker is a giant who goes "steppin' a mile a step" but can't keep out of trouble without the help of his little wife Hoke. Traditional folklore, amusing, but written in dialect. 8-10

- HARRIS, JOEL CHANDLER. *Complete Tales of Uncle Remus*, ed. by Richard Chase. Houghton, 1955.

- . *Uncle Remus, His Songs and Sayings*, rev. ed., ill. by A. B. Frost. Appleton, 1947. Folklore of the American Negro. Whimsical animal stories in dialect which should be told or read aloud. Brer Rabbit is a lovable trickster no child should miss. 8—

## United States: Tall Tales and Other Native Inventions

- BLAIR, WALTER. *Tall Tale America: A Legendary History of Our Humorous Heroes*, ill. by Glen Rounds. Coward McCann, 1944. These tales, collected, retold, and sometimes originated by the author of *Native American Humor*, range from Leif the Lucky, who discovered America and then misplaced it, to a mythical Professor Blur lost in the Pentagon Building. 10-14

- BONTemps, ARNA, and JACK CONROY. *The Fast Sooner Hound*, ill. by Virginia Lee Burton. Houghton, 1942. It is impossible to resist this tall-tale hound. He is a dog and a half, and how he could outrun any train, even the Cannon Ball, is gravely related and hilariously pictured. 8-12

- . *Sam Patch, the High, Wide and Handsome Jumper*, ill. by Paul Brown. Houghton, 1951. Another tall tale by this delightful combination of writers is enhanced with wonderful action pictures of the jumpingest boy in the world. 10-12

- BOWMAN, JAMES CLOYD. *Pecos Bill*, ill. by Laura Bannon. Whitman, 1937. Pecos Bill is the gayest of all our heroes and the closest to the child's understanding and sense of humor. The colorful and humorous illustrations add to the appeal of

- this book. (See Peck, *Pecos Bill and Lightning.*) 9-12
- FELTON, HAROLD. *John Henry and His Hammer*, ill. by Aldren A. Watson. Knopf, 1950. The author has compiled a dramatic and effective account of the Negro superman's life, a part of our railroad epic. 10-13
- FIELD, RACHEL. *American Folk and Fairy Tales*, ill. by Margaret Freeman. Scribner, 1929. An early collection of such diverse items as Indian legends, Negro stories, tall tales, Southern mountaineer stories, and two classics, "Rip Van Winkle" and "The Great Stone Face." 10-14
- JAGENDORF, MORITZ. *New England Beanpot: American Folk Stories to Read and to Tell*, ill. by Donald McKay. Vanguard, 1948. Folk tales of six New England states told with zest and humor. Two other titles in this regional series are: *Sand in the Bag and Other Folk Stories of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois*, ill. by John Moment, Vanguard, 1952, and *Upstate, Downstate; Folk Stories of the Middle Atlantic States*, ill. by Howard Simon, Vanguard, 1949. 10-14
- MALCOLMSON, ANNE. *Yankee Doodle's Cousins*, ill. by Robert McCloskey. Houghton, 1941. This is one of the finest and most satisfying collections of real and mythical heroes from different sections of the United States. 10-14
- PECK, LEIGH. *Pecos Bill and Lightning*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Houghton, 1940. A brief edition with copious illustrations to aid and comfort the slow reader. 8-12
- ROUNDS, GLEN. *Ol' Paul, the Mighty Logger*, ill. by author. Holiday, 1949. Glen Rounds has retold some of the Paul Bunyan stories with an earthy, exuberant zest that is delightful. 10—
- SHAPIRO, IRWIN. *How Old Stormalong Captured Mocha Dick*, ill. by Donald McKay. Messner, 1942. Not only Stormalong, but the legendary super-whale, Moby (or Mocha) Dick. A good yarn. —. *Yankee Thunder, the Legendary Life of Davy Crockett*, ill. by James Daugherty. Messner, 1944. The author is torn between writing about the real Davy and the mythical Davy, but chooses the latter — "Yaller blossom of the forest, half horse, half snapping turtle, the ring-tailed roarer...." Daugherty's pictures are as vigorous as the hero. 10 14
- SHEPHERD, ESTHER. *Paul Bunyan*, ill. by Rockwell Kent. Harcourt, 1941. This is logging in the large, and it gives a good idea of the activities of the lumberjacks along with the nonsense. Besides being the most complete edition of these tales, this book is enriched with Rockwell Kent's superb pictures. 10-14
- United States: Variants of European Tales**
- CHASE, RICHARD, ed. *Grandfather Tales*, ill. by Berkeley Williams, Jr. Houghton, 1948. 9-12
- , *Jack and the Three Sillies*, ill. by Joshua Telford. Houghton, 1950. 8-10
- , *The Jack Tales*, ill. by Berkeley Williams, Jr. Houghton, 1943. 9-12
- , *Wicked John and the Devil*, ill. by Joshua Telford. Houghton, 1951. 9-12
- The American versions of the old-world tales are as vigorous and fresh as the mountain people of the Cumberland and the Smokies from whom they came.
- COTHRAN, JEAN, ed. *With a Wig, With a Wag, and Other American Folk Tales*, ill. by Clifford N. Geary. McKay, 1954. Many of these entertaining tales suggest variants in European and other folklores. The author includes a final chapter describing their parallels. 9-12
- SAWYER, RUTH. *Journey Cake, Ho!* ill. by Robert McCloskey. Viking, 1953. Mountain folk-tale version of *The Pancake* tells of Johnny, the bound-out boy, who chased his runaway journey cake, and returned home with the cake and a fine lot of animals who helped in the chase. Lively illustrations make this an attractive picture-book. 6-10
- Other countries**
- BORSKI, LUCIA MFRECKA, tr. *Polish Folk Tales*, ill. by Erica Gorecka-Egan Sheed, 1947, o p The deeply religious spirit of the Polish people is strikingly revealed in these well told traditional tales which will have special appeal for Catholic children. 10-14
- DEUTCH, BABETTE, and AVRAHAM YARMOLINSKY. *Tales of Faraway Folk*, ill. by Irena Lorentowicz. Harper, 1952. A unique collection of tales from Baltic, Russian, and Asiatic lands. Told with simplicity that will have special appeal for young readers. 9-12
- FILLMORE, PARKER. *The Laughing Prince, A Book of Yugoslav Fairy Tales and Folk Tales*, ill. by Jay Van Everen. Harcourt, 1921. A popular favorite with the children, it contains several good stories for telling. 10-14
- KELSEY, ALICE GEER. *Once the Hodja*, ill. by Frank Dobias. Longmans, 1943. Twenty-four tales from Turkey filled with humor and simple wisdom. —, *Once the Mullah*, ill. by Kurt Werth. Longmans, 1954. Stories told by the Mullah give insight into Persian life and folklore and are often exceedingly funny. 9-12
- Chapter 12 Using folk tales with children**
- Anthologies**
- ARBUTHNOT, MAY HILL. *Time for Fairy Tales Old and New*, ill. by John Avery and others. Scott, 1961. This large anthology includes folk tales classified by racial groups, fables, myths, and selections from the epics. There are besides over forty stories from modern fantasy and, for the grown-ups, first aids to storytelling and reading aloud. 4-14
- Association for Childhood Education (formerly International Kindergarten Union). *Told Under the Green Umbrella*, ill. by Grace Gilson Macmillan, 1930. Favorite nursery tales such as "The Three Billy Goats" and "The Sleeping Beauty." Includes also the Bible Christmas story. 3-8
- BROOKE, L. LESLIE, ed. *The Golden Goose Book*, ill. by author. Warne, 1906. "The Golden Goose,"

"Tom Thumb," "Three Little Pigs," and "Three Bears," delightfully illustrated by Mr. Brooke. 5-10  
 HUBER, MIRIAM BLANTON. *Story and Verse for Children*, ill. by Lynd Ward Macmillan, 1955. A general anthology of children's literature with a good chapter on the values of folk tales

HUTCHINSON, VERONICA, ed. *Chimney Corner Stories*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Putnam, 1927. 3-8

—, *Fireside Stories*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Putnam, 1925. 8-12

Authentic, well-written adaptations, suitable for storytelling or reading aloud. Both books are well illustrated

JOHNSON, EDNA, CARRIE E. SCOTT, and EVELYN SICKELS. *Anthology of Children's Literature*. Houghton, 1948. The chapter on "Folk-Tales, Literary Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends" contains a good selection.

ROJANKOVSKY, GEODOR. *The Tall Book of Nursery Tales*. Harper, 1944. This collection of old tales is notable chiefly for Mr. Rojankovsky's colorful illustrations 5-8

## Storytelling

New York Library Association. *Once upon a Time...* Association, 1955. Help for librarians with preschool hours, picture-book hours, and story hours. Suggested programs and bibliographies are included

SAWYER, RUTH. *The Way of the Storyteller*. Viking, 1942. Informally written in Ruth Sawyer's fine style, this is a contribution both to the art of storytelling and the history of the old tales. It also contains eleven unusual stories, including a favorite, "The Princess and the Vagabond"

SHEDLOCK, MARIP. *Art of the Story Teller*, 3d ed., bibl by Eulalie Steinmetz. Dover, 1951. Guidance in selection of material, techniques of storytelling, and useful bibliographies are included.

## Puppets

ACKLEY, EDITH. *Marionettes: Easy to Make! Fun to Use!* ill. by Marjorie Flack. Lippincott, 1929. An excellent book on the making of cloth marionettes, with many aids to play production. Full-size paper patterns for the marionettes are included with the book. 10-14

FICKLEN, BESSIE. *Handbook of First Puppets*. Lippincott, 1935. Detailed instructions for making hand puppets and their theater are given along with three plays 12-14

JAGENDORF, MORITZ. *First Book of Puppets*, ill. by Jean Michener Watts, 1952. An aid to the making of different types of puppets and marionettes, and technical guidance in play production 8-12

LEWIS, ROGER [pseud. for Harry Zarchy]. *Puppets and Marionettes*, ill. by the author. Knopf, 1952. Some adult guidance is needed to help the child follow these instructions for the making and handling of puppets and marionettes. 9-12

PELS, GLAUBDE. *Easy Puppets*. Crowell, 1951. A unique handbook on how to make puppets of almost anything from potatoes to papier mâché. The book also includes directions for making stages,

scenery, curtains, and props. Even young children could follow these step-by-step directions. 7-14

## Chapter 13 Fables, myths, and epics

### General references

AUSLANDER, JOSEPH, and FRANK HILL. *The Winged Horse*, ill. by Paul Honoré Doubleday, 1927. The story of poets and their poetry for children. Fine references on ballads and epics.

GUERBER, HELENE A. *The Book of the Epic*. Lippincott, 1913, o.p. A summary of all the national epics, copiously illustrated with paintings from the old masters and with interesting excerpts from poetry.

SMITH, RUTH, ed. *The Tree of Life*, ill. by Boris Artzybasheff. Viking, 1942. A distinguished text for a comparative study of religious ideas. It is a compilation of the "testaments of beauty and faith from many lands." Excerpts from the expressions of religious ideals of the Navaho Indians, the Norse, Hindu, Buddhist, Confucianist, and other religions (including the Hebrew and Christian) make up the content of the book. These bear impressive witness to the universality of faith. The book is for adolescents or for adults to use with older children. It is impressive both in its format and content.

### Aesop's fables

*Aesop for Children*, ill. by Milo Winter. Rand McNally, 1919. The fables have been expanded in this edition, making them more like stories. Children enjoy them, and the illustrations are beautiful. 10-14

*Aesop's Fables*, ed. by Laura Harris, ill. by Tony Palazzo. Garden City Bks., 1954. Large illustrations in color and simple retellings of the more familiar fables make this an attractive picture-book introduction to Aesop for younger children. 5-8

*Aesop's Fables*, tr. by V. S. Vernon Jones, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Doubleday, 1912. One of the most satisfactory editions both for children and adults. Chesterton's introduction should not be missed. The illustrations appeal to older children. The fables are related in fine storytelling style. 10-14

*Aesop's Fables*, ill. by Fritz Kredel. Grosset, 1947. An attractive, readable edition which contains over 150 fables. Illustrated in color and black and white. 10-14

*The Fables of Aesop, as first printed by William Caxton, 1484*, ed. intro. by Joseph Jacobs, 2 vols. London: Nutt, 1889, o.p. Found only in unusual collections. Contains Jacobs' history of the fables in full.

JACOBS, JOSEPH, ed. *The Fables of Aesop*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Macmillan, 1950. This classic edition of the fables includes Jacobs' short history of them and is delightfully illustrated. 10-12

TOWNSEND, GEORGE TYLER and THOMAS JAMES, tr. *Aesop's Fables*, ill. by Glen Rounds. Lippincott, 1949. The translation used in this edition is simpler than Jacobs' and the humorous illustrations appeal strongly to children. 10-12

## French fables

- LA FONTAINE. *The Fables of La Fontaine*, tr. by Marianne Moore. Viking, 1954, o.p. These fables retain their original verse form in this translation. A scholarly edition which includes La Fontaine's twelve books of fables and his own original preface. Chiefly an adult source.
- NORTON, ANDRÉ. *Rogue Reynard*, ill. by Laura Bannon. Houghton, 1947. Stories from the French beast epic of Reynard the Fox, which tell of his deeds and misdeeds "and how he was served with King Lion's justice." 9-12

## Indian fables

- See also Bibliography for Chapter 11.
- BABBITT, ELLEN C. *Jataka Tales* (see Bibliography, Chapter 11).
- . *More Jataka Tales* (see Bibliography, Chapter 11).
- BIDPAI. *The Tortoise and the Geese, and Other Fables of Bidpai*, retold by Maude Barrows Dutton, ill. by E. Boyd Smith. Houghton, 1908, o.p. 7-10
- GAER, JOSEPH. *The Fables of India*, ill. by Randy Monk. Little, 1955. Beast tales from three outstanding collections of Indian fables: the Panchatantra, the Hitopadesa, and the Jatakas. The stories are entertainingly presented, and there is excellent background material on the known history of fable literature for the student. 12-16
- The Panchatantra*, tr. by Arthur W. Ryder. Univ. of Chicago, 1925. Adult students of the fables will be interested in discovering here the sources of many Aesop and La Fontaine fables. The proverbs in verse form might provide themes for new fables.

## Modern fables

- ANDERSEN, HANS CHRISTIAN. "The Ugly Duckling," "The Emperor's New Clothes," and others (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- BRENNER, ANITA. *A Hero by Mistake*, ill. by Jean Charlot. W. R. Scott, 1953. Afraid of his own shadow, this little man accidentally captures some bandits, is hailed as a hero, and learns to behave like one. 6-8
- DAUGHERTY, JAMES. *Andy and the Lion* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- FRISKEY, MARGARET. *Seven Diving Ducks* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- GAG, WANDA. *Nothing at All* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- LEAF, MUNRO. *The Story of Ferdinand* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17).
- MCGINLEY, PHYLLIS. *The Plain Princess* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- WILL and NICOLAS. *Chaga* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).

## Greek and Roman myths and epics: adult references

- BENEDICT, RUTH. "Folklore" (see Bibliography, Chapter 11). A complete and authoritative discussion of various theories of the myth.

*Encyclopaedia Britannica*. "Myth and Ritual." Vol. 16, 1955. Discusses the modern theory that ritual is the first stage of religion, and that myth develops to explain ritual and to conserve the morals and tradition of society. Based mainly on Malinowski and other anthropologists.

- FISKE, JOHN. *Myths and Myth Makers*. Houghton, 1900, o.p. A comparative study of the myths of many peoples, classical and primitive.
- GUERBER, HELENE A. *Myths of Greece and Rome*. American Bks., 1893. A standard reference, retelling and interpreting the myths.
- HALLIDAY, WILLIAM REGINALD. "Folklore" (see Bibliography, Chapter 11). Contains a basic definition of the myth and a general discussion of folklore. Does not discuss any specific mythology.
- HESIOD. *The Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, tr. by Hugh G. Evelyn-White. Putnam, 1914, o.p. An invaluable source to be found in large libraries.
- HOMER. *The Odyssey*, tr. by George H. Palmer, ill. by N. C. Wyeth. Houghton, 1929. This cadenced prose will sing in your memory like poetry. For children who are superior readers, this edition illustrated by Wyeth is a superb source for these tales.
- OID. *The Metamorphoses*, tr. by Henry T. Riley. McKay, 1899. A literal prose translation of the Latin versions of the Greek myths and hero tales, with copious notes explaining their fable or allegorical significance.
- REINACH, SALOMON. *Orpheus: A History of Religions*, rev. ed. Liveright, 1930. A fascinating study, though dated in some respects. Pages 84-93 contain the core of his theory explaining the evolution of Greek religion and myth.
- SCHWAB, GUSTAV. *Gods and Heroes*, tr. by Olga Marx and Ernst Morwitz, ill. with designs from Greek vases. Pantheon, 1946. This large and beautiful book still omits a few favorite myths. The English translation from a German adaptation is not always satisfactory, but the book is an excellent source nevertheless.
- TATLOCK, JESSIE M. *Greek and Roman Mythology*. Appleton, 1917. Although intended for high school study, this is a useful book for teachers. Miss Tatlock retells the myths, gives excerpts from the "Homeric Hymns" and modern poetry, and presents some fine photographs of Greek sculpture.
- WOODBERRY, GEORGE E. *The Torch*. Macmillan, 1905, o.p. Two chapters on "The Titan Myth" are devoted to an analysis of the significance of the Prometheus idea, its likeness to Christian ideas, and its use in English poetry. Found in large libraries.

## Greek and Roman myths and epics: children's books

- BENSON, SALLY. *Stories of the Gods and Heroes*, ill. by Steele Savage. Dial, 1940. One of the best recent editions. Occasionally a too-modern note creeps in, but on the whole the interpretation is vigorous and clear. Spirited black-and-white illustrations. 10-14
- CHURCH, ALFRED JOHN. *The Odyssey of Homer*, ill. by John Flaxman. Macmillan, 1951. First published

in 1906, this attractive recent edition is an excellent source for children to read or adults to tell. Stories are arranged in chronological order. 10-14

COLUM, PADRAIC. *The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy, or The Children's Homer*, ill. by Willy Pogány. Macmillan, 1925. A distinguished version, in cadenced prose, simple but in the spirit of the original. Vigorous illustrations in color and black and white. 10-14

— *The Golden Fleece; and the Heroes Who Lived Before Achilles*, ill. by Willy Pogány. Macmillan, 1921. A companion volume to *The Children's Homer*, and equally fine. 10-14

COOLIDGE, OLIVIA E. *Greek Myths*, ill. by Edouard Sandoz. Houghton, 1949. Mrs. Coolidge has retold twenty-seven of the most widely known Greek myths. Here the gods are not idealized—indeed the book opens with an unappealing tale of trickery—but the stories have authenticity. They will appeal to young people rather than children. 10-16

DE SELINCOURT, AUBREY. *Odysseus the Wanderer*, ill. by Norman Meredith. Criterion Bks., 1956. A lusty, modern retelling of the Odyssey that should lure many young readers into an acquaintance with this epic before high school days. 11—

GALT, TOM. *The Rise of the Thunderer*, ill. by John Mackey Crowell, 1954. An absorbing retelling of the ancient Greek story of creation. The language is modern and the narrative moves at a swift pace as it tells of gods who fought for power, sons against fathers. 10-14

HAWTHORNE, NATHANIEL. *A Wonder Book, and Tanglewood Tales*, ill. by Maxfield Parrish. Dodd, 1934. Although not good interpretations of the old myths, these stories are nevertheless worth examining for their storytelling qualities. Editions illustrated by Walter Crane and Arthur Rackham are available in many libraries. 10-14

KINGSLEY, CHARLES. *The Heroes*, ill. by Vera Bock. Macmillan, 1954. Beautifully retold tales which make a fine cycle for the storyteller. 10-14

SELLEW, CATHARINE. *Adventures with the Gods*, ill. by George and Doris Hauman. Little, 1945. An introduction to the more familiar myths, simply written for younger children. 9-12

SEWELL, HELEN. *A Book of Myths*, sel. from Bulfinch's *Age of Fable*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1942. Some people dislike, others are enthusiastic about the stylized illustrations in black and white, or sharp blue, black, and white. They are undeniably authentic in spirit and detail. For a Greek ballet or dramatization, these are worth study. A recommended edition. 10-14

## Norse myths and epics: adult references

EDDA SAEMUNDAR. *The Poetic Edda*, tr. by Lee M. Hollander. Univ. of Texas Press, 1928, o.p. Another good translation with notes on verse form.

MUNCH, PETER A. *Norse Mythology, Legends of Gods and Heroes*, rev. by Magnus Olsen, tr. by Sigurd B. Hustrvedt. American Scandinavian Foundation, 1926, o.p. Authoritative and complete interpretation of sources.

*The Poetic Edda*, tr. by Henry Adams Bellows. Ameri-

can-Scandinavian Foundation, 1923. Not only a fine translation but good background and evaluation of material.

*Volsunga Saga: The Story of the Volsungs and Niblungs, with Certain Songs from the Elder Edda*, tr. by Eirikr Magnusson and William Morris. London: Walter Scott, n.d., o.p. This prose translation of the difficult verse form of the *Elder Edda* is easy to read and is the basis for Morris' beautiful verse version of the saga.

## Norse myths and epics: children's books

BROWN, ABBIE FARWELL. *In the Days of Giants*, ill. by E. B. Smith. Houghton, 1902. This is a sterling adaptation of the Norse myths. 10-14

COLUM, PADRAIC. *Children of Odin*, ill. by Willy Pogány. Macmillan, 1920. Norse myths and hero tales retold in a continuous narrative ending with the death of Sigurd. Our best source for children. 10-14

COOLIDGE, OLIVIA. *Legends of the North*, ill. by Edouard Sandoz. Houghton, 1951. A wide variety of stories includes tales of the northern gods and heroes, the Volsungs, and other sagas. 12-14

HOSFORD, DOROTHY G. *Sons of the Volsungs*, ill. by Frank Dobias. Holt, 1949. A splendid version of the Sigurd tales adapted from William Morris' *The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the Fall of the Niblungs*. 11-14

— *Thunder of the Gods*, ill. by George and Claire Loudon. Holt, 1952. Distinguished retellings of the Norse myths: stories of Odin, Thor, Balder, Loki, and other familiar tales. Excellent for storytelling or reading aloud. 11-14

SELLEW, CATHARINE. *Adventures with the Heroes*, ill. by Steele Savage. Little, 1954. Retold in simple language are the stories of the Volsungs and Niblungs. 9-12

## English epics

HOSFORD, DOROTHY G. *By His Own Might: the Battles of Beowulf*, ill. by Laszlo Maulay. Holt, 1947. A distinguished retelling of *Beowulf* for boys and girls. 11-16

LANIER, SIDNEY. *The Boy's King Arthur*, ill. by N. C. Wyeth, ed. from Sir Thomas Malory's *History of King Arthur and His Knights of the Round Table*. Scribner, 1942. An authoritative and popular version of this hero cycle; the best one to use for reading or telling. 10-14

MCSPADDEN, J. WALKER. *Robin Hood and His Merry Outlaws*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. World Pub., 1946. While the McSpadden versions of the Robin Hood tales are not so satisfying as Howard Pyle's, they are good, and much easier to read. Mr. Slobodkin's illustrations are humorous and appealing. 9-12

MALORY, SIR THOMAS. *Le Morte d'Arthur*, ill. by W. Russell Flint. London: Warner, publisher to the Medici Society [1920], 2 vols. Children who are superior readers are fascinated with this source of the Arthur stories. Too difficult for the average reader. 12-16



PLYLE, HOWARD. *The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood of Great Renown in Nottinghamshire*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1946. This is the great prose edition of the Robin Hood tales, the best source for reading and telling. 12-14

— *Some Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*, rev. ed., ill. by author. Scribner, 1954. This book contains a dozen stories adapted from the longer book, and would serve as an introduction for younger readers. 10-13

— *The Story of King Arthur and His Knights*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1933. Any Pyle edition is written with grace and distinction. This is no exception. 12-14

*Song of Robin Hood*, ed. by Anne Malcolmson, music art. by Grace Castagnetta, ill. by Virginia Lee Burton. Houghton, 1947. Eighteen ballads in rhythmic text illustrated with distinguished black-and-white drawings. Traditional music for many of the ballads is included. The book is the result of careful research in art and music as well as in selection of the ballads. 10-14

## Other national epics

DEUTSCH, BETTIE. *Heroes of the Kalevala*, ill. by Fritz Eichenberg. Messner, 1940. This version has not only literary distinction but continuity. Text and illustrations bring out the lusty humor of the tales. 10-14

GAER, JOSEPH. *The Adventures of Rama*, ill. by Randy Monk. Little, 1954. One of the best-loved epics of India is the story of Prince Rama and of his wife Sita, stolen from him by a demon king. The careful selection of incidents makes this an absorbing and unified tale. 12-14

HULL, ELEANOR. *The Boy's Cuchulainn* (see Bibliography, Chapter 11). 12-14

NORTON, ANDRÉ [pseud.]. *Huon of the Horn*, ill. by Joe Krush. Harcourt, 1951. An episode of the Charlemagne saga retold with distinction. This Charlemagne saga retold on a sixteenth-century transadaptation is based on a sixteenth-century translation and tells of a cruelly betrayed knight who tries to regain his emperor's favor. 12-14

*The Song of Roland*, tr. by Merrim Sherwood, ill. by Edith Emerson. Longmans, 1938. This is one of the finest translations of the story of Roland for younger readers, and is illustrated with distinctive line drawings. 12-16

## Chapter 14 New magic

### Adult reference

GODDEN, RUMER. *Hans Christian Andersen: a Great Life in Brief*. Knopf, 1955. "Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale." So wrote Andersen, and no one could have told his fairy tale more poignantly than Rumer Godden, the English novelist.

### Children's books

ANDERSEN, HANS CHRISTIAN. *The Complete Andersen*, tr. by Jean Hersholt, ill. by Fritz Kredel. Het-

age, 1952. Jean Hersholt captures both the spirit and fine literary style of Andersen in this translation of 168 tales. 12—

— *Fairy Tales*, ed. by Svend Larsen, tr. by R. P. Keigwin, ill. by Vilhelm Pedersen. Scribner, 1950. The Danish literary folk consider this translation, together with those of the late Paul Leysac and Jean Hersholt, the closest to the original manuscript. The book contains nineteen favorite tales. The small print would discourage younger readers, but the Andersen enthusiast will delight in its content. 12—

— *It's Perfectly True, and Other Stories*, tr. by Paul Leysac, ill. by Richard Bennett. Harcourt, 1938. This translation of twenty-eight stories by a famous Danish storyteller has been a favorite collection for younger readers. 11-14

— Other editions:

Ill. by George and Doris Hauman. Macmillan, 1953.

Ill. by Elizabeth Mackinstry. Coward, 1933.

Ill. by Arthur Szyk. Grosset, 1945.

Ill. by Tasha Tudor. Oxford, 1945.

Ill. by Rex Whistler. Oxford, 1936, o.p.

— Single-story editions:

*The Emperor's New Clothes*, ill. by Virginia Burton. Houghton, 1949. An enchanting edition of Andersen's funniest story. 7-10

*The Steadfast Tin Soldier*, ill. by Marcia Brown. Scribner, 1953. Beautiful pastel illustrations give added charm to the story of the toy soldier and his little dancing doll sweetheart. 6-10

*The Ugly Duckling*, tr. by R. P. Keigwin, ill. by Johannes Larsen. Macmillan, 1955. Water-color sketches by a famous artist distinguish this special edition. 6-9

ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. *Told Under the Magic Umbrella*, Macmillan, 1939. This collection of fanciful tales includes such favorites as "Ask Mr. Bear" and "Peter the Goldfish." 8-12

ATWATER, RICHARD and FLORENCE. *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, ill. by Robert Lawson. Little, 1938. 8-12

AYME, MARCEL. *The Wonderful Farm*, tr. by Norman Denny, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1951. The wonderful farm is quite an ordinary French farm except that the animals happen to talk. This is a book children and adults will both enjoy. 7-10

BAILEY, CAROLYN. *Miss Hickory*, ill. by Ruth Gannett. Viking, 1946. 10-13

BAKER, MARGARET. *Homer the Tortoise*, ill. by Leo Bates. Whitteley House (McGraw), 1950. Homer the tortoise is the most nonchalant talking beast of recent times. He spoke both Greek and English, coached the girls, played a good game of chess, and won the classic race between hare and tortoise at the pet show. 8-10

BANNERMAN, HELEN. *The Story of Little Black Sambo*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1923 (first pub. in 1900). 4-7

BARRE, SIR JAMES. *Peter Pan*, ill. by Nora Unwin. Scribner, 1950. Peter Pan, the boy who never grew up, and all his delightful companions are delightfully visualized for the children by Nora Unwin's illustrations for this new edition. 9-12

BATE, NORMAN. *Who Built the Bridge? A Picture Story*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1954.

- *Who Built the Highway? A Picture Story*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1953. The new highway could never have been built if the great roadbuilding machines had not done their part.
- *Who Fishes for Oil? A Picture Story*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1955. A restless little shrimp boat shifts its activities to a project for drilling oil under the sea. Action, imaginative illustrations, and cadenced texts make good reading. 6-9
- BIANCO, MARGERY. *The Velvetene Rabbit*, ill. by William Nicholson. Doubleday, 1926. 6-9
- BOSTON, L. M. *The Children of Green Knowe*, ill. by Peter Boston. Harcourt, 1955. A lonely boy goes to live with his great-grandmother in the family home, Green Knowe. Here the boy makes friends with children of a past generation, who died in the Great Plague. The theme will not appeal to all children, but it is one of the most beautifully written stories in recent years. 11-15
- BROOKS, WALTER. *Freddy and the Man from Mars*. Knopf, 1954.
- *Freddy Goes to Florida*. Knopf, 1949. Between these two books lies a long series of Freddy stories that enjoy enormous popularity. Whether Freddy, the pig, is leading the animals of Mr. Bean's farm to Florida, or playing detective, he can be counted on for fun and excitement. 9-12
- BROWN, MARCIA. *Stone Soup*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1947. Three soldiers reform a selfish village by persuading the people to make a remarkably inexpensive soup—with a few additions! 7-10
- BROWN, MARGARET WISE. *The Runaway Bunny*, ill. by Clement Hurd. Harper, 1942. 4-6
- BULLA, CLYDE. *The Poppy Seeds*, ill. by Jean Charlot. Crowell, 1955. 7-10
- BRUNHOFF, JEAN DE. *The Story of Babar, the Little Elephant*. Random, 1937. A series of these books follows, ending with the posthumous *Babar and Father Christmas*, 1940. 3-8
- BURTON, VIRGINIA. *Choo Choo*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1937. 5-7
- *Katy and the Big Snow*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1943. 4-9
- *The Little House*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1942. Caldecott Medal. 5-8
- *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1939. 6-8
- BUTTERWORTH, OLIVER. *The Enormous Egg*, ill. by Louis Darling. Little, 1956. The village of Freedom, New Hampshire, is thrown into a twitter when young Nate Twitchell's hen hatches a dinosaur egg. The creature's incredible growth soon makes it a national concern. Humorous drawings capture the mood of this funny story. 9-13
- CARROLL, LEWIS [pseud. for Charles Lutwidge Dodgson]. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass*, ill. by John Tenniel. Heritage, 1944, o.p. (first pub. in 1865 and 1871). One of the best loved and most quoted fantasies for children. 11-15
- ill. by John Tenniel. Grosset, 1946.
- ill. by John Tenniel. Macmillan, 1923.
- ill. by John Tenniel. 2 vols. Peter Pauper, 1940, o.p.
- ill. by John Tenniel. World Pub., 1946
- ill. by Leonard Weissgard. Harper, 1949, o.p. 10—
- CAMERON, ELEANOR. *Stowaway to the Mushroom Planet*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. Little, 1956. A new journey into space is complicated by the intrusion of a stowaway.
- *The Wonderful Flight to the Mushroom Planet*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. Little, 1954. Two small boys and their inventive neighbor build a space ship and take off to aid the people of a dying planet. 9-11
- CARLSON, NATALIE. *Alphonse, That Bearded One*, ill. by Nicolas [pseud. for Nicolas Mordvinoff]. Harcourt, 1954. 8-11
- *The Talking Cat, and Other Stories of French Canada; Retold*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Harper, 1952. There is humor and vigor in these seven tales that make them delightful for telling or reading aloud. 9-12
- *Wings Against the Wind*, ill. by Mircea Vasiliu. Harper, 1955. The sea gull hatched in the pocket of a young Breton sailor proves to be a staunch defender of the fishing boats. 10-12
- COATSWORTH, ELIZABETH. *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Macmillan, 1930. A humble Japanese artist risks his future to include the portrait of his cat in a painting for the temple. A miraculous change in the picture rewards his unselfish act. Newbery Medal. 10-14
- COBLENTZ, CATHERINE CATE. *The Blue Cat of Castle Town*, ill. by Janice Holland. Longmans, 1949. The blue kitten, born under a blue moon, learned the river's song, "Enchantment is made of three things—of beauty, peace, and content." 12-14
- COLLODI, CARLO [pseud. for Carlo Lorenzini]. *The Adventures of Pinocchio*, tr. by Carol Della Chiesa, ill. by Artilio Mussino. Macmillan, 1951.
- ill. by Herman I. Bacharach. Houghton, 1927, o.p.
- ill. by Richard Floethe. World, 1946.
- ill. by Anne Heyneman. Lippincott, 1948.
- ill. by Fritz Kredel. Grosset, 1946. 9-12
- CROWLEY, MAUDE. *Azor*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Oxford, 1948.
- *Azor and the Blue-Eyed Cow*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Oxford, 1951.
- *Azor and the Haddock*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Oxford, 1949.
- Azor is a small, everyday sort of boy who happens to understand animals when they talk to him. Their confidences sometimes get him into trouble but his complete honesty and good will invariably save the day. 7-9
- DAUGHERTY, JAMES. *Andy and the Lion*, ill. by author. Viking, 1938. Young Andy has read about lions but never expected to meet one. The encounter ends in high adventure for both of them, and for enthusiastic young readers. 6-8
- DAVIS, ALICE. *Timothy Turtle*, ill. by G. B. Wiser. Harcourt, 1940. All Timothy Turtle's animal friends rally to his aid when he falls on his back and cannot turn over. 5-8
- DE LA MARE, WALTER. *The Three Royal Monkeys*, ill. by Mildred Eldridge. Knopf, 1948. Originally published as *The Three Mulla Nulgars*. 12-15
- DE LEEUW, ADELE. *Nobody's Doll*, ill. by Anne Vaughan. Little, 1946. The story of a lost doll and a kindly Scottie, both of whom finally come to the

- little boy and girl they yearn for. Each adventure of these friendly wanderers is a complete episode. Good to read aloud. 7-10
- DOLBIER, MAURICE. *Torten's Christmas Secret*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. Little, 1951. The freshest, gayest Christmas story in years involves Santa's toy factory, hard-working gnomes, lists of good and bad children, and lovely glimpses of Santa's frosty, sparkling arctic world. 4-8
- DU BOIS, WILLIAM PENE. *Bear Party*, ill. by author. Viking, 1951. 5-8
- . *The Giant*, ill. by author. Viking, 1954. 9-12
- . *Great Geppy*, ill. by author. Viking, 1940. 9-11
- . *Peter Graves*, ill. by author. Viking, 1950. 10-14
- . *Three Policemen; or, Young Bottsford of Farbe Island*, ill. by author. Viking, 1938. 10-12
- . *Twenty-one Balloons*, ill. by author. Viking, 1947. A professor of mathematics decides to try a balloon journey for a rest. His adventures are as logically wild as Alice's, and very funny. 10-12
- DUVOISIN, ROGER. *Petunia*, ill. by author. Knopf, 1950. 5-8
- ETS, MARIE HALL. *Another Day*, ill. by author. Viking, 1953. 4-7
- . *In the Forest*, ill. by author. Viking, 1944. Walking through the forest, a small boy has a highly satisfying time meeting imaginary wild animals in friendly mood. 4-7
- . *Mister Penny*, ill. by author. Viking, 1935. 6-8
- . *Mister Penny's Race Horse*, ill. by author. Viking, 1956. All the animals get into mischief going to the fair, and Limpy finds that he can be a race horse. 6-8
- . *Mr. T. W. Anthony Woo*, ill. by author. Viking, 1951. 6-8
- . *Play with Me*, ill. by author. Viking, 1955. This runner-up for the Caldecott Medal is an exquisite picture-story showing what happens to a little girl when she learns to be still in the woods. 3-6
- FAIRSTAR, MRS. [pseud. for Richard Horne]. *Memoirs of a London Doll*, ill. by Emma L. Brock Macmillan, 1922 (first pub. in 1846). 9-12
- FATIO, LOUISE. *The Happy Lion*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Whitelsey House (McGraw), 1954. An unlooked gate inspires the amiable lion in a little French zoo to return the calls of the villagers. His welcome is chilling, to say the least. Roger Duvoisin's drawings in color are highly humorous and full of atmosphere. 5-8
- FIELD, RACHEL. *Hitty: Her First Hundred Years*, ill. by Dorothy P. Lathrop. Macmillan, 1929. Newbery Medal. 11-14
- FISCHER, HANS E. *The Birthday*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1954. The animals in *Putsch* fete their old mistress, Lisette, with a wonderful surprise party on her seventy-sixth birthday. 5-8
- . *Putsch, the Kitten Who Always Wanted to Be Something Else*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1953. A dissatisfied little kitten tries to emulate every creature on the farm, with discouraging results. The beautiful and appealing color illustrations are by a famous Swiss artist. 5-8
- FLACK, MARJORIE. *Ask Mr. Bear*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1932. 3-7
- FRISKEY, MARGARET. *Seven Diving Ducks*, ill. by Lucia Patton. McKay, 1940, o.p. The seventh little duckling is afraid to dive, but finally learns to do it. 5-7
- GAG, WANDA. *The Funny Thing*, ill. by author. Coward-McCann, 1929. A most dragonlike "aminal" is broken of the bad habit of eating children's beloved dolls. 6-8
- . *Millions of Cats*, ill. by author. Coward-McCann, 1928. 5-8
- . *Nothing at All*, ill. by author. Coward-McCann, 1941. Through the use of a magic phrase, a lonesome little invisible puppy becomes "see-able," and finds a happy home. 5-7
- . *Snippy and Snappy*, ill. by author. Coward-McCann, 1931. Two unwary little field mice are rescued by their wiser father from the baited mouse trap. 5-8
- GANNETT, RUTH S. *The Dragons of Blueand*, ill. by Ruth Chrisman Gannett. Random, 1951. 7-10
- . *Elmer and the Dragon*, ill. by Ruth Chrisman Gannett. Random, 1950. The adventures of Elmer and the candy-striped baby dragon he rescued from Wild Island are popular favorites with younger readers. 7-10
- . *My Father's Dragon*, ill. by Ruth Chrisman Gannett. Random, 1948. 8-10
- GODDEN, RUMER. *The Dolls' House*, ill. by Dana Sainsbury. Viking, 1948. 8-10
- . *The Fairy Doll*, ill. by Adrienne Adams. Viking, 1956. Elizabeth, the youngest of four, is not very clever, quite clumsy, and often naughty until the fairy doll takes her in hand. She is only the doll from the top of the Christmas tree, but it is surprising what she does for Elizabeth. 5-8
- . *Impunity Jane*, ill. by Adrienne Adams. Viking, 1954. 8-10
- . *The Mousewife*, ill. by William Pene du Bois. Viking, 1951. Expanded into a story from a note in Dorothy Wordsworth's Journal, this is an exquisitely written little fable of the friendship of a mouse and a dove. 7-10
- GRAHAME, KENNETH. *The Wind in the Willows*, ill. by Ernest H. Shepard. Scribner, 1953 (first pub. in 1904). 10-12
- . *Wind in the Willows*, intro. by A. A. Milne, ill. by Arthur Rackham. Heritage, 1944 (first pub. in 1904). 10-12
- GRAMATKY, HARDIE. *Hercules*, ill. by author. Putnam, 1940. 5-7
- . *Little Toot*, ill. by author. Putnam, 1939. 5-7
- . *Loopy*, ill. by author. Putnam, 1941. 5-8
- HALE, LUCRETIA P. *Peterkin Papers*, ill. by Harold Brett. Houghton, 1924 (first pub. in 1880). 10-12
- HEINLEIN, ROBERT. *Rocket Ship Galileo*, ill. by Thomas Voter. Scribner, 1947. Working together with an inventor, a trio of teen-age boys complete a rocket ship and make a trip to the moon. Entertaining science fiction based on a background of scientific knowledge. 12-14
- . *Space Cadet*, ill. by Clifford N. Geary. Scribner, 1948. It is the year 2075, and at the rocket-ship training school at Terra Base, Colorado, boys

- from different planets come to train as cadets for Solar Patrol's interplanetary communication system. 12—
- HEYWARD, DU BOSE *The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes*, ill. by Marjorie Flack. Houghton, 1939. A fanciful Easter story of a mother rabbit who became one of the five Easter Bunnies and was rewarded with golden shoes. 5-9
- JONES, ELIZABETH ORTON. *Tug*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1942. When Twig found the red tomato can in the yard, she thought it would make a beautiful home for a fairy. And a fairy did come to delight a city child. 8-10
- KAHL, VIRGINIA. *Away Went Wolfgang!* ill. by author. Scribner, 1954. Wolfgang was the least useful dog in the tiny Austrian village, until the housewives discovered that when Wolfgang ran, he could churn a whole cartful of milk into butter! 5-8
- *The Duchess Bakes a Cake*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1955. There was consternation in the kingdom when the duchess was carried skyward atop the light fluffy cake she had baked. The story is told in lively rhyme and bright pictures and is satisfyingly funny. 6-10
- *Maxie*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1956. When the baron held a competition for the biggest, bravest, and swiftest dog in the village, Maxie the dachshund used his wits and won. 4-8
- KIPLING, RUDYARD. *Just So Stories*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1902
- ill. by J. M. Gleeson. Doubleday, 1912.
- ill. by Nicolas [pseud. for Nicolas Mordvinoff]. Garden City, 1952. 8-12
- LAWSON, ROBERT *Ben and Me*, ill. by author. Little, 1939. 9-12
- *Mr. Revere and I*, ill. by author. Little, 1953. 11-14
- *Rabbit Hill*, ill. by author. Viking, 1944. 9-12
- *The Tough Winter*, ill. by author. Viking, 1954. 9-12
- LEWIS, CLIVE STAPLES *The Last Battle*, ill. by Pauline Baynes. Macmillan, 1956.
- *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, ill. by Pauline Baynes. Macmillan, 1950.
- *The Magician's Nephew*, ill. by Pauline Baynes. Macmillan, 1955
- *Prince Caspian*, ill. by Pauline Baynes. Macmillan, 1951.
- *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader*, ill. by Pauline Baynes. Macmillan, 1952. 8-12
- LINTGREN, ASTRID *Pipps Longstocking*, tr. by Florence Lamborn, ill. by Louis S. Glanzman. Viking, 1950. 9-12
- LOFTING, HUGH *The Story of Dr. Dolittle*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1920. 9-12
- *The Story of Mrs. Tubb*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1923, o.p. 6-8
- *The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1922. 9-12
- MACDONALD, GEORGE. *At the Back of the North Wind*, ill. by George and Doris Hauman. Macmillan, 1950.
- *The Princess and the Goblin*, ill. by Nora S. Unwin. Macmillan, 1951. Here are recent editions of two old favorites, beautifully written but limited in their appeal. 10-12
- MCGINLEY, PHYLIS *The Horse Who Had His Picture in the Paper*, ill. by Helen Stone. Lippincott, 1951. Joey, the discontented horse, yearns for publicity that will silence the policeman's boastful horse. The climax is utterly satisfying to young readers. 4-8
- *The Horse Who Lived Upstairs*, ill. by Helen Stone. Lippincott, 1944. It takes a trip to the country to teach Joey that he is a true city dweller at heart. 4-8
- *The Plain Princess*, ill. by Helen Stone. Lippincott, 1945. A charming fable about a homely princess who was made beautiful by wise old Dame Goodwit. 6-8
- MACGREGOR, ELLEN. *Miss Pickrell Goes to Mars*, ill. by Paul Galdone. McGraw, 1951. Hilarious tale of a determined old lady who set out to order a rocket ship and its crew from her pasture land. It was the moment of the ship's take-off to Mars, and along went unwilling Miss Pickrell to some startling adventures. This story has been a tremendous favorite. 8-11
- MILNE, A. A. *The House at Pooh Corner*, ill. by Ernest Shepard. Dutton, 1928.
- *Winnie the Pooh*, ill. by Ernest Shepard. Dutton, 1926.
- These stories were reprinted in 1950, with larger type and more attractive format. 8-10
- NORTON, MARY. *The Borrowers*, ill. by Beth and Joe Krush. Harcourt, 1953. 9-12
- *The Borrowers Afield*, ill. by Beth and Joe Krush, Harcourt, 1955. 9-12
- POTTER, BEATRIX. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, ill. by author. Warne, 1903. Between 1903 and 1930, nineteen books were published in the Peter Rabbit series. 3-8
- PROKOFIEFF, SERGE. *Peter and the Wolf*, foreword by Serge Koussevitzky, ill. by Warren Chappell. Knopf, 1940. This is a delightful version of the story of how Peter outwits the wolf. It is especially valuable as an introduction to the orchestral recording of the story. 7-12
- PYLE, HOWARD. *Pepper and Salt*, ill. by author. Harper, 1923 (first pub. in 1885).
- *Wonder Clock*, ill. by author. Harper, 1887. 10-12
- REY, HANS A. *Curious George*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1941. An inquisitive little monkey has one adventure after another from the time he leaves his jungle home until he goes to live in the zoo. 4-8
- RUSKIN, JOHN. *The King of the Golden River*, ill. by Fritz Kredel. World Pub., 1946 (first pub. in 1840). 10-14
- SAINT-EXUPÉRY, ANTOINE DE. *The Little Prince*, tr. by Katherine Woods, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1943. When an aviator is forced down in the Sahara desert, he is startled at meeting the prince of a very small asteroid. In the days that follow, the aviator gains new insight from the little prince's perception of spiritual and aesthetic values. This story is beautifully told, but adults rather than children appreciate its underlying philosophy. 12—

- SANDBURG, CARL. *Rootabaga Pigeons*, ill. by Maud and Miska Petersham. Harcourt, 1923. 10-12
- . *Rootabaga Stories*, ill. by Maud and Miska Petersham. Harcourt, 1922. 8-12
- SAUER, JULIA L. *Fog Magic*. Viking, 1943. Girls enjoy this sensitive and beautifully written story of a little girl who goes back in time to a people and a village which no longer exist. The day comes when she knows that her "fog magic" must end. 10-12
- SAWYER, RUTH. *The Enchanted Schoolhouse*, ill. by Hugh Troy. Viking, 1936. When Brian Boru Gallagher came to America he brought a fairy-man with him to show the glories of Ireland. They turned Lobster Cove topsy-turvy. 9-12
- SEUSS, DR. [pseud. for Theodor Seuss Geisel]. *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street*, ill. by author. Vanguard, 1937. 5-8
- . *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*, ill. by author. Random, 1949. 7-10
- . *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, ill. by author. Vanguard, 1938. 6-10
- . *Horton Hatches the Egg*, ill. by author. Random, 1940. 5-8
- . *Horton Hears a Who!* ill. by author. Random, 1954. 5-8
- . *McElligot's Pool*, ill. by author. Random, 1947. Ignoring the sarcastic comments of the farmer who owns the pool, a small boy fishes in it with wonderful imagination. 7-10
- . *On Beyond Zebra*, ill. by author. Random, 1955. 5-7
- . *Scrambled Eggs Super!* ill. by author. Random, 1953. 5-8
- SWAYNE, SAMUEL F and ZOA. *Great Grandfather in the Honey Tree*, ill. by authors. Viking, 1949. Pioneer days in Indiana are the background of this amusing tall tale of Great-grandfather's hunting trip. His fantastic adventures land him up to his neck in honey. The hilarious absurdity of this tale tickles children. 5-12
- THURBER, JAMES. *Many Moons*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. Harcourt, 1943. Told in fairy-tale style, this is the appealing story of a little princess who yearned for the moon but learned to be satisfied with less. 7-10
- TODD, RUTHVEN. *Space Cat*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Scribner, 1952. Flyball was a daring cat, and when he accompanied his favorite pilot on a trip to the moon, he not only saved his life but made an important scientific discovery. 8-10
- TRAVERS, E. L. *Mary Poppins*, ill. by Mary Shepard. Harcourt, 1934. 10-13
- . *Mary Poppins Comes Back*, ill. by Mary Shepard. Harcourt, 1935. 10-13
- . *Mary Poppins in the Park*, ill. by Mary Shepard. Harcourt, 1952. 10-13
- . *Mary Poppins Opens the Door*, ill. by Mary Shepard and Agnes Sims. Harcourt, 1943. 8-12
- WATKINS-PITCHFORD, DENYS J. *The Little Grey Men*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1949. Rich in woodland atmosphere is this story of the adventures of four little gnomes. First published in England, this book won a Carnegie Medal award (British equivalent of the Newbery Medal). 10-13
- WHITE, E. B. *Charlotte's Web*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1952. 10-12
- WILL and NICOLAS [pseud. for William Lipkind and Nicolas Mordvinoff]. *Chaga*. Harcourt, 1955. Chaga the elephant was none too kind to creatures smaller than himself. Not until he swallowed some grass that made him shrink to very small size did he learn what it means to be small in a big world. 5-8
- . *The Christmas Bunny*. Harcourt, 1952. On Christmas eve, young Davy brings gifts of food to the little woodland creatures, and is almost certain that the next day's surprise is their gift. 4-7
- . *Finders Keepers*. Harcourt, 1951. Two dogs find the same bone and try to discover from a series of advisors which dog shall keep the bone. The canny solution satisfies both the dogs and young readers. Caldecott Medal. 4-7

## Chapter 15 Here and now

### Realism for the youngest

- ARDIZZONE, EDWARD. *Little Tim and the Brave Sea Captain*, ill. by the author. Oxford, 1955 (first pub in 1936). 4-6
- Association for Childhood Education. *Told under the Blue Umbrella*, ill. by Marguerite Davis Macmillan, 1933. A collection of realistic stories. Mary G. Phillips' "Paddy's Three Pets" is a gem for storytelling. 4-10
- AUSTIN, MARGOT. *Barney's Adventure*, ill. by author. Dutton, 1941. A good circus story for the kindergarten age. 4-8
- BESKOW, ELSA. *Pelle's New Suit*, ill. by author. Harper, 1929. 4-8
- BROWN, MARCIA. *The Little Carousel*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1946. Into the crowded tenement neighborhood comes the little traveling merry-go-round. Its kindly owner lets Anthony earn the rides he cannot pay for. 5-8
- BROWN, MARGARET WISE. *The City Nouny Book*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Harper, 1939. 10-13
- . *The Little Cowboy*, ill. by Esphyr Slobodkina. W. R. Scott, 1948. 4-6
- . *The Little Farmer*, ill. by Esphyr Slobodkina. W. R. Scott, 1948. 4-6
- . *The Little Fisherman*, ill. by Dahlov Ipcar. W. R. Scott, 1945. 4-6
- . [Golden MacDonald, pseud.] *The Little Island*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Doubleday, 1946. 4-6
- . [Golden MacDonald, pseud.] *Little Lost Lamb*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Doubleday, 1945. 4-8
- . *The Runaway Bunny* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14). 10-13
- BULLA, CLYDE R. *A Ranch for Danny*, ill. by Grace Paul. Crowell, 1951. 10-13
- . *Surprise for a Cowboy*, ill. by Grace Paul. Crowell, 1950. 10-13
- A story and its sequel about a little city boy who wanted to be a cowboy, and how his desired ranch became a reality. 7-9
- CLARK, MARGERY [pseud. for Mary E. Clark and

- Margery C. Quigley]. *The Poppy Seed Cakes*, ill. by Maud and Miska Petersham. Doubleday, 1929. 4-9
- DALGLIESH, ALICE *America Travels*, ill. by Hildegard Woodward. Macmillan, 1933. Short stories about each phase of transportation, from the stage-coach to the modern train and airplane. 8-9
- *The Blue Teapot*, ill. by Hildegard Woodward. Macmillan, 1931.
- *Relief's Rocker*, ill. by Hildegard Woodward. Macmillan, 1932.
- Appealing and childlike stories with a background of the Nova Scotia coast. 9-10
- DE REGNIERS, BEATRICE. *The Giant Story*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1953. All day long, Tommy is a great giant busy with gigantic feats, but at the day's end he is a sleepy little boy ready for bed. 4-6
- *A Little House of Your Own*, ill. by Irene Haas. Harcourt, 1955. A childlike introduction to the importance of being alone at times—under the table or in a blanket tent or other familiar spots. 5-7
- *Was It a Good Trade?* ill. by Irene Haas. Harcourt, 1956. Crisp rhyming lines tell of the little man who trades knife for wife, and continues his trades to the merry end. 4-7
- FELT, SUE *Rosa Too Little*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1950. It is an important day for Rosa when she can at last write her name and have a library card to take home books as the other children do. 5-7
- FLACK, MARJORIE *Wait for William*, ill. by author and R. A. Holberg. Houghton, 1935. 4-8
- HAYWOOD, CAROLYN "B" *Is for Betsy*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1939.
- *Betsy and Billy*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1941.
- *Back to School with Betsy*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1943.
- *Betsy and the Boys*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1945.
- *Betsy's Little Star*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1950. 6-9
- *Betsy and the Circus*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1954.
- *Betsy's Busy Summer*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1956.
- *Little Eddie*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1947.
- *Eddie and the Fire Engine*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1949.
- *Eddie and Gardens*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1951.
- *Eddie's Pay Dirt*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1953.
- *Eddie and His Big Deals*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1955. 7-10
- *Here's a Penny*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1944.
- *Penny and Peter*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1946.
- *Penny Goes to Camp*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1948.
- IVINS, DOROTHY. *The Long Hike*, ill. by author. Viking, 1956. The picnic basket is empty before two little visitors to the country finish their hike, so back home they hurry for lunch. 6-8
- KOCH, DOROTHY. *I Play at the Beach*, ill. by Feodor Rojankovsky. Holiday, 1955. A little girl gives a vivid description of all the events of her day at the seashore. Illustrations have color and atmosphere. 5-8
- KRAUS, RUTH. *The Grouching Story*, ill. by Phyllis Rowland. Harper, 1947. 4-6
- *A Hole Is to Dig: a First Book of First Definitions*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1952. 4—
- *A Very Special House*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1953. 4-7
- LENSKI, LOIS *Cowboy Small*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1949. Here is the life of a cowboy, riding the range, rounding up cattle, and cooking outdoors.
- *Let's Play House*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1944. Molly and Polly imitate the household duties of grown-ups.
- *The Little Airplane*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1938.
- *The Little Auto*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1934.
- *The Little Farm*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1942.
- *The Little Fire Engine*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1946.
- *The Little Sail Boat*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1937.
- *The Little Train*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1940.
- *Papa Small*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1951. The activities of the Small family throughout the week.
- LINDMAN, MAJ. *Snipp, Snapp, Snurr and the Red Shoes*, ill. by author. Whitman, 1932. 4-8
- *Snipp, Snapp, Snurr, and the Gingerbread*, ill. by author. Whitman, 1932. 4-8
- MCCLOSKEY, ROBERT. *Blueberries for Sal*, ill. by author. Viking, 1948.
- *Make Way for Ducklings*, ill. by author. Viking, 1941. 4-8
- *One Morning in Maine*, ill. by author. Viking, 1952. 3-7
- POLITI, LEO. *A Boat for Peppe*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1950. Young Peppe has a part in the annual blessing of the fishermen's boats at Monterey. 6-9
- *Juanita*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1948. 6-9
- *Little Leo*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1951. All the way from America back to his Italian village little Leo wore his beloved Indian suit and before long, every child in the village had a homemade Indian suit. 6-9
- *Pedro, the Angel of Olvera Street*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1946. 6-9
- *Song of the Swallows*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1949. Little Juan, anticipating the yearly return of the swallows to Capistrano on St. Joseph's Day, is allowed to help ring the mission bells and welcome them back. Caldecott Medal. 6-9
- SAUER, JULIA. *Mike's House*, ill. by Don Freeman. Viking, 1954. The library is "Mike's House" to young Robert because it houses his favorite book, *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel*. 5-7
- TRESSELT, ALVIN. *Autumn Harvest*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1951.
- *Bonnie Best, the Weavervane Horse*, ill. by Marylin Hafner. Lothrop, 1949.

- *Follow the Wind*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1950.
- *"Hi, Mister Robin!"* ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1950.
- *I Saw the Sea Come In*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1954.
- *Johnny Maple-Leaf*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1948.
- *Rain Drop Splash*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Lothrop, 1946.
- *Sun Up*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1949.
- *White Snow, Bright Snow*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1947. 5-8
- TUDOR, TASHA. *Pumpkin Moonshine*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1938. This Halloween story makes a good introduction to the other beautifully illustrated books of Tasha Tudor. 4-7

## Realism for older children

### Forerunners

- ALCOTT, LOUISA M. *Little Women*, ill. by Jessie Wilcox Smith. Little, 1934 (first pub in 1868).
- *Little Women*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Crowell, 1955. 12-16
- BURNETT, FRANCIS HODGSON. *The Secret Garden*, ill. by Nora Unwin. Lippincott, 1949 (first pub. in 1909). 8-12
- TWAIN, MARK [pseud. for Samuel Clemens]. *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, ill. by Norman Rockwell, 2 vols. in 1. Heritage, 1952 (first pub. in 1876 and 1885). 10-14

### American, British, and Irish stories

- BINNS, ARCHIE. *Sea Pup*, ill. by Robert Candy. Little, 1954. 10-14
- BRINK, CAROL RYRIE. *Family Grandstand*, ill. by Jean MacDonald Porter. Viking, 1952.
- *Family Sabbatical*, ill. by Susan Foster. Viking, 1956.
- These delightful stories tell of the activities of a professor's family in a midwestern college town and during a year's trip to France. 9-12
- CHASTAIN, MADYE LEE. *Bright Days*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1952.
- *Fripsey Fun*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1953.
- *Fripsey Summer*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1953.
- The Fripseys are a big family in a small town, and this trio of stories about them has warmth, humor, and a delightful assortment of people and activities. 9-12
- CHURCH, RICHARD. *Five Boys in a Cave*. Day, 1951.
- Five boys carefully plan their expedition into an old tunnel. When an accident occurs, it is the quiet unassuming lad who takes over leadership of the group and brings them to safety. 11-14
- CLEARY, BEVERLY. *Henry Huggins*, ill. by Louis Darling. Morrow, 1950.
- *Ellen Tebbits*, ill. by Louis Darling. Morrow, 1951.
- *Henry and Beezus*, ill. by Louis Darling. Morrow, 1952.

- *Henry and Ribsy*, ill. by Louis Darling. Morrow, 1954.
- *Beezus and Ramona*, ill. by Louis Darling. Morrow, 1955. 8-12
- CORBIN, WILLIAM. *High Road Home*. Coward-McCann, 1954. A French boy comes to the United States to look for a lost father. Nico is hostile to all Americans, but as he shuttles back and forth across the country he learns that Americans are as varied as their huge country. 12-16
- ENRIGHT, ELIZABETH. *The Saturdays*, ill. by author. Rinehart, 1941.
- *The Four-Story Mistake*, ill. by author. Rinehart, 1942.
- *Then There Were Five*, ill. by author. Rinehart, 1944.
- *Thimble Summer*, ill. by author. Rinehart, 1938. 8-12
- ESTES, ELEANOR. *The Moffatt*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. Harcourt, 1941.
- *The Middle Moffatt*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. Harcourt, 1942.
- *Rufus M.*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. Harcourt, 1943. 7-10
- *Ginger Pye*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1951. 8-12
- HOLBERG, RUTH. *Rowena Carey*, ill. by Grace Paul. Doubleday, 1949.
- *Tomboy Row*, ill. by Grace Paul. Doubleday, 1952. Rowena is a fat, horse-loving little girl who longs for a horse, and does achieve jodhpurs and an occasional ride. The sequel continues her blithe adventures plus a few growing pains. 10-13
- LE GRAND [pseud. for Le Grand Henderson]. *Augustus Rides the Border*, ill. by author. Bobbs, 1947. Augustus and his ever wandering family travel down to the Mexican border in a broken-down old car, and with a minimum of cash. 9-11
- LOVELACE, MAUD HART. *Betsy-Tacy*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Crowell, 1940.
- *Betsy, Tacy and Tib*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Crowell, 1941.
- *Betsy and Tacy Go over the Big Hill*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Crowell, 1942.
- *Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown*, ill. by Lois Lenski. Crowell, 1943.
- Betsy, Tacy, and Tib are close friends in a Minnesota town at the turn of the century, and their warm friendship continues into their romantic years. The first four titles in this popular series tell of their grade-school years. (See Romance for others in series.) 7-12
- MCCLOSKEY, ROBERT. *Centerburg Tales*, ill. by author. Viking, 1951. Further adventures of Homer Price and reminiscences by his grandfather.
- *Homer Price*, ill. by author. Viking, 1943.
- *Lentil*, ill. by author. Viking, 1940. 8-12
- RANSOME, ARTHUR. *Swallowtail and Amazon*, ill. by Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1931.
- *Swallowdale*, ill. by Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1932.
- *Peter Duck*, ill. by themselves and Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1933.
- *Winter Holiday*, ill. by Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1934.

## Negro stories

- *We Didn't Mean to Go to Sea*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1938, o.p.
- *Secret Water*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1940. 12-14
- ROBINSON, TOM. *Trigger John's Son*, ill. by Robert McCloskey. Viking, 1949. Trigger is an orphan in the process of being adopted when he decides to inspect his future parents. He gets off the train prematurely and the action begins. Robert McCloskey's sensitive drawings add to the fun. 10-14
- SPYKMAN, E. C. *A Lemon and a Star*. Harcourt, 1955. 11-14
- STREATFIELD, NOEL. *Ballet Shoes*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Random, 1937.
- *Circus Shoes*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Random, 1939.
- *Movie Shoes*, ill. by Susanne Suba. Random, 1949.
- *Tennis Shoes*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Random, 1938.
- *Theater Shoes*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Random, 1945. 10-14
- STREET, JAMES. *Good-bye, My Lady*. Lippincott, 1954. 12—
- TUNIS, JOHN. *All-American*, ill. by Hans Walleen. Harcourt, 1942. 10-16
- *The Duke Decides*, ill. by James MacDonald. Harcourt, 1939.
- *The Iron Duke*, ill. by Johan Bull. Harcourt, 1938.
- The best college stories we have for the precollege boy. *The Iron Duke* is about an Iowa boy's adjustments to Harvard. *The Duke Decides* finds him a member of the Olympic track team. 12-16
- *The Kid Comes Back Tomorrow*, 1946. The readjustment of a boy back from the service. A baseball story. 12-14
- *The Kid from Tomkinsville*, ill. by J. H. Barnum. Harcourt, 1940. Roy Tucker, a small-town boy, makes a big-league baseball team. Fine story of his training, mistakes, and triumphs. All the Tunis books are popular sports stories with a strong emphasis on community ideals. 11-15
- VAN STOCKUM, HILDA. *Canadian Summer*, ill. by author. Viking, 1948. Adventures of the Mitchell family in a summer cottage near Montreal, where Mr. Mitchell has gone to work.
- *The Cottage at Bantry Bay*, ill. by author. Viking, 1938.
- *Francie on the Run*, ill. by author. Viking, 1939, o.p.
- *The Mitchells*, ill. by author. Viking, 1945.
- *Pegeen*, ill. by author. Viking, 1941. 10-14
- WILSON, HAZEL. *Herbert*, ill. by John N. Barron. Knopf, 1950.
- *Herbert Again*, ill. by John N. Barron. Knopf, 1951.
- *Island Summer*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1949.
- *More Fun with Herbert*, ill. by John N. Barron. Knopf, 1954.
- Herbert is a younger Homer Price, and his adventures and vicissitudes are equally funny. *Island Summer* is a family story with the boy at the center of interest. These are very popular stories. 8-12
- BEIM, LORRAINE and JERROLD. *Two Is a Team*, ill. by Ernest Crichtlow. Harcourt, 1945. 6-9
- BONTEMPS, ARNA. *Sad-Faced Boy*, ill. by Virginia Burton. Houghton, 1937. 8-10
- BURGWIN, MEBANE HOLOMAN. *Lucky Mischief*, ill. by Gertrude Howe. Oxford, 1949. This book combines the virtues of being a good mystery, a story about 4 H activities, and a picture of a substantial, rural Negro community. The feud between two boys is finally dissolved in their devotion to their pet steers. 10-14
- DE ANGELI, MARGUERITE. *Bright April*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1946. 8-10
- EVANS, EVA KNOX. *Araminta*, ill. by Erick Berry [pseud. for Allena Best]. Putnam, 1935.
- *Araminta's Goat*, ill. by Erick Berry [pseud. for Allena Best]. Putnam, 1938.
- *Jerome Anthony*, ill. by Erick Berry [pseud. for Allena Best]. Putnam, 1936. 7-10
- FAULKNER, GEORGE, and JOHN BECKER. *Melindy's Medal*, ill. by Elton C. Fax. Messner, 1945. A humorous and tender story of a little Negro girl, Melindy, who is boundlessly happy when the family moves to a new housing project. When a fire breaks out at her school, Melindy proves her bravery. 8-10
- GARRARD, PHILLIS. *Banana Tree House*, ill. by Berta and Elmer Hader. Coward-McCann, 1938. Charming story of island Negro children, especially a little girl who triumphs over her older brothers by discovering a valuable cave. 6-8
- HUNT, MABEL LEIGH. *Ladycake Farm*, ill. by Clothilde Embree Funk. Lippincott, 1952. 9-12
- JACKSON, JESSE. *Call Me Charley*, ill. by Doris Spiegel. Harper, 1945. 10-13
- LANG, DON. *On the Dark of the Moon*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Oxford, 1943. A little Negro boy with pet raccoons and possum. A moving story of the animals and the boy's love for them. 9-14
- LATTIMORE, ELEANOR. *Junior, a Colored Boy of Charleston*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1938. 8-10
- MEANS, FLORENCE CRANNELL. *Great Day in the Morning*. Houghton, 1946. Another lovable Negro girl experiences the bitterness of racial prejudice but has the courage to go on. At Tuskegee she comes to know Dr. Carver and decides to become a nurse. 12-14
- *Shuttered Windows*, ill. by Armstrong Sperry. Houghton, 1938. A Northern Negro girl adjusts to more primitive Southern life. 12-14
- NEWELL, HOPE. *A Cap for Mary Ellis*. Harper, 1953. Two young nursing students enter as the first Negro trainees in a New York State hospital. There they make a happy adjustment to the new life, their fellow workers and the patients. The story is told with warmth and humor. 12-16
- SHARPE, STELLA G. *Tobe*, ill. with photographs by Charles Fastell. Univ. of North Carolina Press, 1939. 6-8
- TARRY, ELLEN, and MARIE HALL ETS. *My Dog Rinty*, ill. by Alexander and Alexandra Alland. Viking, 1946. 8-10
- TUNIS, JOHN R. *All-American* (see American, British, and Irish stories).



## Stories of American Indians

- Note: A few historical stories are included for background.
- ARMER, LAURA. *Waterless Mountain*, ill. by author and Sidney Armer. Longmans, 1931. 12-14
- BUFF, MARY. *Dancing Cloud*, rev. ed., ill. by Conrad Buff. Viking, 1957. 8-10
- . *Hah-Nee*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Houghton, 1956. 8-10
- . *Magic Maize*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Houghton, 1953. 9-12
- BULLA, CLYDE. *Eagle Feather*, ill. by Tom Two Arrows. Crowell, 1953. Eagle Feather, a young Navaho, loved the outdoor life of a shepherd and had no wish to go to school until changed circumstances made school a longed-for goal. Three songs add to the pleasure of a good story and fine pictures. 7-10
- CLARK, ANN NOLAN. *Blue Canyon Horse*, ill. by Allan Houser. Viking, 1954. 8-10
- . *In My Mother's House*, ill. by Velino Herrera. Viking, 1941. 8-12
- . *Little Navajo Bluebird*, ill. by Velino Herrera. Viking, 1943. 8-12
- . *Santiago*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Viking, 1955. 12-15
- . *Secret of the Andes*, ill. by Jean Charlot. Viking, 1952. 10-14
- COBLENTZ, CATHERINE CATH. *Sequoia*. Longmans, 1946. The story of a great Cherokee Indian who developed the Cherokee alphabet and taught his people to read. 12-14
- LAMPMAN, EVELYN. *Navaho Sister*, ill. by Paul Lantz. Doubleday, 1956. Orphaned twelve-year-old Rose, cared for by her grandmother, finds real happiness in being with other young companions in the Oregon Indian school. 10-13
- LAURITZEN, JONREED. *The Ordeal of the Young Hunter*, ill. by Hoke Denetossie. Little, 1954. A distinguished story of a twelve-year-old Navaho boy who grows to appreciate what is good in the cultures of the white man and the Indian. Background of the story is Flagstaff, Arizona. 11-14
- MCGRAW, ELOISE. *Moccasin Trail*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Coward-McCann, 1952. 11-14
- MCKINCKLE, D'ARCY. *Runner in the Sun*, ill. by Allan Houser. Winston, 1954. The background of this story is the Southwest before the coming of the white men. A young Indian lad realizes the needs of his people and makes a hazardous journey to the lands of the Aztecs to find a harder maize. 12-14
- MEANS, FLORENCE CRANNELL. *Whispering Girl*, ill. by Oscar Howard Houghton, 1941. A Hopi family adopts three children. The sixteen-year-old girl helps solve the problems which make up the story. 12-15
- MOON, GRACE. *Chi-Wee*, ill. by Carl Moon. Doubleday, 1925. 8-12
- O'MORAN, M. [pseud. for Mabel O. Moran]. *Trail of the Little Pasute*, ill. by Claire Davison. Lippincott, 1952. 10-13
- WYATT, GERALDINE. *Sun Eagle*, ill. by Carl Kidwell. Longmans, 1952. Brit Mason, whose early years were spent among the Comanche Indians, is torn between his loyalty to them and to his own people. 12-16
- ## Regional and religious minorities
- ANGELO, VALENTI. *The Bells of Bleeker Street*, ill. by author. Viking, 1949.
- . *Big Little Island*, ill. by author. Viking, 1955. A war orphan learns to feel at home among the Italian-Americans of Manhattan. 10-13
- . *Nino* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- . *Paradise Valley*, ill. by author. Viking, 1940. 8-12
- Association for Childhood Education. *Told under the Stars and Stripes*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Macmillan, 1945. 8-12
- BUFF, MARY and CONRAD. *Peter's Pinto*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Viking, 1949. A Utah ranch summer is highlighted for Peter when he acquires a wild pinto pony of his own. Mormon background. 9-11
- CARROLL, RUTH and LATROBE. *Beanie*, ill. by authors. Oxford, 1953.
- . *Tough Enough*, ill. by authors. Oxford, 1954.
- . *Tough Enough's Trip*, ill. by authors. Oxford, 1956. 7-9
- CREEDLE, ELLIS. *Down, Down the Mountain*, ill. by author. Nelson, 1934
- DE ANGELL, MARGUERITE. *Henner's Lydia*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1936.
- . *Skipper School*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1939. 8-12
- . *Thee, Hannab!* ill. by author. Doubleday, 1940.
- . *Up the Hill*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1942. 8-12
- . *Yonie Wondermose*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1944. 5-7
- ESTES, ELEANOR. *The Hundred Dresses*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. Harcourt, 1944. A touching story of a little girl with a "funny foreign" name, and not many dresses. 7-10
- GARST, SHANNON. *Cowboy Boots*, ill. by Charles Hargens. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1946. Young Bob discovers that it takes more than boots to make a cowboy. Good Western. 9-12
- GATES, DORIS. *Blue Willow*, ill. by Paul Lantz. Viking, 1940. 10-12
- JUDSON, CLARA INGRAM. *The Green Ginger Jar [They Came from China]*, a Chinatown Mystery, ill. by Paul Brown. Houghton, 1949. A young Chinese-American brother and sister thought their grandmother and parents adhered too closely to old country ways, and so they set out to change them. 10-12
- . *The Lost Violin [They Came from Bohemia]*, ill. by Margaret Bradfield. Houghton, 1947. The story of a Bohemian family who brought their creative skills and love of music to America. Background is Chicago in the 1890's.
- . *They Came from Dalmatia; Peter's Treasure*, ill. by Ursula Koering. Houghton, 1945, o.p. All the difficulties that face the non-English-speaking and impoverished immigrant were encountered by and impoverished Petrovich family from Dalmatia, the newly arrived Petrovich family in the new land. before they found security in the new land. 9-12
- . *They Came from Scotland*, ill. by M. A. Reed. Houghton, 1944. 9-12
- . *They Came from Sweden*, ill. by E. C. Caswell. Houghton, 1942. 9-12
- JUSTUS, MAY. *Children of the Great Smoky Moun-*

- tains, ill. by Robert Henneberger. Dutton, 1952. 7-10
- , *Here Comes Mary Ellen*, ill. by Helen Finger. Lippincott, 1940. 8-12
- , *Lucky Penny*, ill. by Frederick T. Chapman. Aladdin, 1951. Two boys, their mules, and their dog are very much alive in this story of the Tennessee mountains. 9-12
- KRUMGOLD, JOSEPH. *...and now Miguel*, ill. by Jean Charlott Crowell, 1953. 9-12
- Land of the Free Series. This series includes several fine stories which highlight contributions of different nationalities to American development.
- HAVIGHURST, WALTER and MARION. *Song of the Pine; A Story of Norwegian Lumbering in Wisconsin*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Winston, 1949.
- LUNDY, JO EVALIN. *Tidewater Valley; A Story of the Swis in Oregon*, ill. by Margaret Ayer. Winston, 1949.
- MEANS, FLORENCE and CARLETON. *Silver Fleece; A Story of the Spanish in New Mexico*, ill. by Edwin Schmidt. Winston, 1950.
- OAKES, VIRGINIA (VANYA). *Footprints of the Dragon; A Story of the Chinese and the Pacific Railways*, ill. by Tyrus Wong. Winston, 1949.
- ROBINSON, GERTRUDE. *Sign of the Golden Fish; A Story of the Cornish Fishermen in Maine*, ill. by Frederick T. Chapman. Winston, 1949.
- ZEIGLER, ELSIE. *The Blowing-Wind [A Story of Bohemian Glassmaking in Ohio]*, ill. by Jacob Landau. Winston 1955. 11-15
- LAWRENCE, MILDRED. *The Homemade Year*, ill. by Susanne Suba. Harcourt, 1950. The pressing economies and hard work of their mortgaged Pennsylvania farm had made her relatives extremely sober, when gay young Vicky came to spend a year. From her the family learned there could be fun as well as hard work, and Vicky herself gained a new maturity. 10-12
- , *Peachtree Island*, ill. by Mary Stevens. Harcourt, 1948. After having been passed about among numerous relatives, nine-year-old Cissie found a real home with Uncle Eben in the Great Lakes peach-growing area. Cissie loved the work, Uncle Eben, and the happy winter when the harvest was in. 8-10
- , *Sand in Her Shoes*, ill. by Madye Lee Chastain. Harcourt, 1949. The family move to the east coast of Florida brings a new kind of life to an eager young brother and sister for whom the sea and scenery are a totally different experience. 9-12
- LENSKI, LOIS. *Bayou Suzette*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1943.
- , *Blue Ridge Billy*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1946.
- , *Boom Town Boy*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1948.
- , *Cotton in My Sack*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1949.
- , *Judy's Journey*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1947.
- , *Prarie School*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1951.
- , *Strauberry Girl*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1945. 9-12
- LIDE, ALICE, and MARGARET JOHANSEN. *The Wooden Locket* (see Mystery tales).
- LINDQUIST, JENNIE D. *The Golden Name Day*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1955. Nancy's visit to Grandma and Grandpa Benson and their Swedish neighbors reaches its joyous climax when a name day is found for her. A heart-warming story with fine characterization. 9-11
- MUSGRAVE, FLORENCE. *Marged*, ill. by Arline K. Thomson. Farrar, Straus, 1956. Twelve-year-old Marged and her family, including Grandma, arrived from Wales, eager for a home on the river, near Pittsburgh. After a few brief months of happiness, floods reached their home and cost the lives of the parents. Marged's heartbreak and slow adjustment make this an unusual story. 11-14
- SEREDY, KATE. *A Tree for Peter*, ill. by author. Viking, 1911. A story of shantytown complicated by a rather confusing symbolism, but a beautiful story with some of Kate Seredy's finest pictures. 9-12
- SIMON, CHARLIE MAY. *Lost Corner*, ill. by Howard Simon. Dutton, 1935. 10-12
- , *Robin on the Mountain*, ill. by Howard Simon. Dutton, 1934. Cadmus, 1940. An Ozark mountain boy builds a log house for his family's first permanent home. 12-14
- , *Roundabout*, ill. by Howard Simon. Dutton, 1941. Family adventures in a village near the Mississippi. 10-12
- SORENSEN, VIRGINIA. *The House Next Door*, ill. by Lili Cassel Scribner, 1954. 13-16
- , *Plain Girl*, ill. by Charles Geer. Harcourt, 1955. 9-12
- STONG, PHIL. *Honk the Moose* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17).
- STUART, JESSE. *The Brattiest Boy*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. McGraw, 1953. 8-12
- , *A Penny's Worth of Character*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. McGraw, 1954. 7-10
- , *Red Mule*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. McGraw, 1955. 8-12
- TAYLOR, SYDNEY. *All-of-a-kind Family*, ill. by Helen John. Follett, 1951.
- , *More All-of-a-kind Family*, ill. by Mary Stevens. Follett, 1954. 9-12
- TUNIS, JOHN R. *Keystone Kids*. Harcourt, 1943. A fine sports story for the teen age—the happy resolution of anti-Semetic feeling is achieved by the students. 12-16
- YATES, ELIZABETH. *Mountain Born*, ill. by Nora Unwin. Coward-McCann, 1943. 8-11
- , *A Place for Peter*, ill. by Nora Unwin. Coward-McCann, 1952. 10-14
- Two stories of rare distinction have for their setting a New England mountain farm. In the first book, young Peter cares for Biddy, the little black lamb, proudly wears a coat woven from her wool, and endures the grief of losing her after she dies in a mountain storm. In the second book, *A Place for Peter*, it is not until his mother has to go away that Peter comes into his own and proves that he can do a man's work. There is an underlying spirituality in these stories as well as a deep feeling for nature, for animals, and for the dignity of the human individual.

## Mystery tales

- EVERSON, FLORENCE and HOWARD. *The Secret Cave*, ill. by Lucina Smith Wakefield Dutton, 1930. 7-10
- HIGHTOWER, FLORENCE. *Mrs. Wappinger's Secret*, ill. by Beth and Joe Krush. Houghton, 1956. A mystery story that is highly humorous and well written. Eccentric Mrs Wappinger of a Maine resort island is quite sure she has ancestral buried treasure somewhere on her property. Young Charlie Porter, summer visitor, is more than delighted to aid her in a secret treasure-hunting alliance. 11-14
- JEWETT, ELEANORE. *Cobbler's Knob*, ill. by Christine Price Viking, 1956. A girl solves the mystery of a haunted house with exciting results. 9-12
- , *Mystery at Boulder Point*, ill. by Jay H Bar-num. Viking, 1949. Good characterization and atmosphere mark this exciting tale of two girls who solve the mystery of an abandoned house. 11-13
- KASTNER, ERICH. *Emil and the Detectives*, tr. by May Massee, ill. by Walter Trier. Doubleday, 1930. Robbed while traveling to Berlin to visit his grandmother, young Emil, with the lively assistance of a group of boys, tracks down the thief. 10-13
- KELLY, ERIC P. *Treasure Mountain*, ill. by Raymond Lufkin. Macmillan, 1937. A modern Western which starts with a murder mystery and includes a search for treasure. 12-14
- KYLE, ELISABETH [pseud for A. M. Dunlop] *Holly Hotel*, ill. by Nora Unwin Houghton, 1947. A Scotch family opens its home to boarders and the children of the family soon become involved in the mystery of a lost manuscript. Unusually good background of the country, convincing characters. 10-13
- LANSING, E. H. *Deer Mountain Hideaway*, ill. by Marc Simont. Crowell, 1953. 9-12
- , *Deer River Raft*, ill. by Marc Simont. Crowell, 1955. 9-12
- LAWRENCE, ISABELLE. *The Gift of the Golden Cup* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- , *Niko, Sculptor's Apprentice* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- , *A Spy in Williamsburg*, ill. by Manning Lee. Rand McNally, 1955. 9-12
- , *The Theft of the Golden Ring* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- LEIGHTON, MARGARET. *Singing Cave*, ill. by Manning Lee Houghton, 1945. A good Western notable for its wholesome attitudes. 12-14
- LIDE, ALICE A., and MARGARET JOHANSEN. *The Mystery of the Mabteb*, ill. by Avery Johnson. Longmans, 1942, o.p. 12-14
- , *The Wooden Locket*, ill. by Corydon Bell Viking, 1953. 11-14
- LINDGREN, ASTRID. *Bill Bergson Lives Dangerously*, tr. by Herbert Antoine, ill. by Don Freeman. Viking, 1954. 11-14
- , *Bill Bergson, Master Detective*, tr. by Louis Glanzman Viking, 1952. 10-13
- These two mystery stories from the Swedish are told with considerable humor in spite of their dramatic plots. In *Bill Bergson, Master Detective* Bill and his friends Anders and Eva Lotta track down the stolen jewels and restore them to the police. In the other book they identify a murderer. 10-13
- LOCKWOOD, MYNA. *The Violin Detectives*. Oxford, 1940. A little Italian-American boy leads his gang in finding part of a rare violin his father is repairing. 7-10
- MEADER, STEPHEN. *The Buckboard Stranger*, ill. by Paul Caille. Harcourt, 1954. A mysterious stranger rides into a small New Hampshire town with a Negro leading a slim horse. Two boys discover a few tantalizing clues that lead to action and danger for Chuck, Barney, and the wonderful horse. 12—
- , *The Fish Hawk's Nest*, ill. by Edward Shenton. Harcourt, 1952. Exciting tale of smuggling on the New Jersey coast in the 1820's. Good characterizations and background. 11-14
- , *Jonathan Goes West*, ill. by Edward Shenton. Harcourt, 1946. 11-14
- , *Red Horse Hill*, ill. by Lee Townsend. Harcourt, 1930. 14-16
- , *Shadow in the Pines*, ill. by Edward Shenton. Harcourt, 1942. 14-16
- , *Who Rides in the Dark?* ill. by James MacDonald. Harcourt, 1937. 14-16
- ORTON, HELEN F. *Mystery at the Little Red School House*, ill. by R Emmett Owen Lippincott, 1941. 8-11
- , *Mystery of the Secret Drawer*, ill. by Sandra James Lippincott, 1945. 8-11
- , *Mystery up the Chimney*, ill. by Robert Doremus Lippincott, 1947. 8-11
- , *The Secret of the Rosewood Box*, ill. by Robert Ball Lippincott, 1937. 8-11
- , *The Treasure in the Little Trunk*, ill. by Robert Ball Lippincott, 1932. 8-11
- PEASE, HOWARD. *Jungle River*, ill. by Armstrong Sperry. Doubleday, 1948. 12-14
- , *Secret Cargo*, ill. by Paul Forster. Doubleday, 1946. 12-14
- ROBERTSON, KEITH. *Ice to India*, ill. by Jack Weaver. Viking, 1955. 12-14
- , *The Mystery of Burnt Hill*, ill. by Rafaello Busoni. Viking, 1952. 12-14
- , *Three Stuffed Owls*, ill. by Jack Weaver. Viking, 1954. 10-14
- RUGH, BELLE D. *Crystal Mountain*, ill. by Ernest H. Shepard. Houghton, 1955. 11-14
- STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS. *Treasure Island*, ill. by C. B. Falls World Pub., 1946 (first pub in 1883). 12-16
- WILSON, ELEANORE. *H Pixie on the Post Road*, ill. by author. Dutton, 1939. An early nineteenth-century story of a baby girl left at an inn by a strange rider. 10-12
- WINTERFELD, HENRY. *Detectives in Togas* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).

## Romance

- BELL, MARGARET. *Love Is Forever*, Morrow, 1954. 12-16
- , *Watch for a Tall White Sail* Morrow, 1948. 12-16
- An Alaskan author has written two fine junior novels with the background of her country. In *Watch for a Tall White Sail*, sixteen-year-old Florence Monroe is meeting with true pioneer courage the harsh existence in wild Nicols Bay where her father and brothers have started a salmon industry. Here she meets her future husband when he rescues her from drowning in the bay. In *Love Is Forever*, Florence marries at eighteen and leaves for a distant

wilderness home. The first year ends in happy unity after considerable conflict. 14-

CANDILL, REBECCA. *The House of the Fifers*, ill. by Genia. Longmans, 1954. Spoiled fifteen-year old Monica Fifer is sent to the ancestral farm of the Fifers for the summer. Rebellious and selfish, Monica learns the hard way, but the disastrous effects of the drouth wake her up. Well-drawn characters and warm family feeling compensate for the standard plot.

CAVANNA, BETTY. *A Girl Can Dream*. Westminster Press, 1948. Shy, oversensitive Lorette wins a block of flying lessons for writing an essay in the high-school contest. Her love of planes gives her a new zest for living, and a more outgoing personality in her relations with boys and other girls.

— *Going on Sixteen*. Westminster Press, 1946. Julie forgets some of the miseries of her social failures by plunging into her favorite occupations. In the process of dog training and drawing she finds herself.

— *Six on Easy Street*. Westminster Press, 1954. A resentful Debby parts from Craig, her favorite date, and reluctantly accompanies her family to the small resort they plan to run on Nantucket. Her sense of family is quickly restored after an accident to her brother, and life becomes bright once again when Craig comes to see her. 12-16

CLEARY, BEVERLY. *Fifteen*, ill. by Beth and Joe Krush. Morrow, 1956. Jane at fifteen wants above all a handsome boy friend. Her progress, along with the essential family life of fifteen-year-olds, is told with a light and satisfying reality. 12-15

COLEMAN, PAULINE. *The Different One*. Dodd, 1955. Freckles and a father who does not approve of dates or high heels are two major worries of fifteen-year-old Ella Dillon, self-absorbed in the problems of growing up. 12-15

DALY, MAUREEN. *Seventeenth Summer*. Dodd, 1942. Vacation days bring Angie Morrow a full calendar of activities, and all the joys and sorrows of first love. When time for college approaches, Angie realizes how much she has grown emotionally during that summer holiday. 14-

LOVELACE, MAUD HART. *Betsy and Joe*, ill. by Vera Neville Crowell, 1948.

— *Betsy and the Great World*, ill. by Vera Neville Crowell, 1952.

— *Betsy in Spite of Herself*, ill. by Vera Neville Crowell, 1946.

— *Betsy Was a Junior. A Betsy Tacy High School Story*, ill. by Vera Neville Crowell, 1947.

— *Betsy's Wedding*, ill. by Vera Neville Crowell, 1955.

— *Heaven to Betsy*, ill. by Vera Neville Crowell, 1945.

The high school years bring new friends, and activities, and problems too, to Betsy, Tacy, and Tib. Betsy discovers her affection for steadfast Joe growing, and the series concludes with their marriage (See American, British, and Irish stories for earlier titles in series). 12-15

SELLARS, NAOMI. *Cross My Heart*. Doubleday, 1953. Kathy Barnum feels she has 'arrived' when she joins the high school sorority. Soon she discovers

that the group's ideas and activities do not coincide with the school's best interests. She resigns, and finds a happier and freer companionship with other girls and boys. 12-16

STOLZ, MARY. *The Organdy Cupcakes*. Harper, 1951. In this happy combination of career and romance stories, three student nurses in their final year of training are ready for the future, two with marriage in the offing, and the third ready at last to make the best of a home situation with an unwelcome stepmother.

— *The Sea Gulls Woke Me*. Harper, 1951. Over-protected Jean Campbell, a sorry wallflower at the school dance, welcomes a chance to spend the summer at her uncle's seashore resort as a waitress. In the close contact with other student helpers, both her latent social qualities and a capacity for understanding others develop.

Mrs. Stolz' stories face youthful problems at a somewhat more adult level, and are for the more mature young reader. 14-

## Chapter 16 Other times and places

### American historical fiction

ALCOTT, LOUISA MAY. *Little Women* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

BERRY, ERICK [pseud. for Allena Best]. *Hay-Foot, Straw Foot*, ill. by author. Viking, 1954. Tale of a little drummer boy in the French and Indian wars who inspired the tune of "Yankee Doodle." 9-12

BRINK, CAROL RYRIE. *Caddie Woodlawn*, ill. by Kate Seredy. Macmillan, 1935.

— *Magical Melons; More Stories about Caddie Woodlawn*, ill. by Marguerite Davis. Macmillan, 1944. 9-12

BRONSON, LYNN. *The Runaway*. Lippincott, 1953. An absorbing story of a runaway farm boy in the Oregon Territory who joins the soldiers at Fort Columbia. His contact with kindly Captain Ulysses Grant and other men who have become historical figures makes this an unusual and distinctive tale set in the gold rush days. 12-16

BULLA, CLYDE ROBERT. *Down the Mississippi*, ill. by Peter Burchard Crowell, 1954. A farm boy goes down the great river on a log raft as a cook's helper. Storms and an Indian raid add plenty of excitement.

— *Riding the Pony Express*, ill. by Grace Paull. Crowell, 1948. An easy-to-read but never commonplace story of a boy who carried the mail in an emergency.

— *The Secret Valley*, ill. by Grace Paull. Crowell, 1949. A Missouri family goes to California in search of gold but finds other treasures instead. Mr. Bulla with his easy texts manages always a unique and pleasing style; he is a story teller of distinction. 8-10

CARR, MARY JANE. *Children of the Covered Wagon*, ill. by Bob Kuhn. Crowell, 1943. An excellent story of a pioneer family who journeyed from Missouri to Oregon's Willamette Valley in 1844. 10-12

CATTON, BRUCE. *Banners at Shenandoah*. Double-

- day, 1955. Bruce Catton, Pulitzer Prize winner, writes absorbingly of Civil War days in this story of young Bob Hayden, flag bearer for General Sheridan. 12-16
- CAUDILL, REBECCA. *Tree of Freedom*, ill. by Dorothy Bayley Morse. Viking, 1949. 12-14
- CLUFF, TOM. *Minutemen of the Sea*, ill. by Tom O'Sullivan Wilcox & Follett, 1955. In the first naval battle of the Revolutionary War the people of Machias Township in Maine fought off the King's Navy rather than surrender their lumber for enemy use. A well-told story based on a true incident. 10-14
- COATSWORTH, ELIZABETH. *Away Goes Sally*, ill. by Helen Sewell Macmillan, 1934
- , *Fair American*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1940.
- , *Five Bushel Farm*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Macmillan, 1939.
- , *The Golden Horseshoe*, ill. by Robert Lawson. Macmillan, 1935. The daughter of an Indian princess and a Virginia officer finally wins respect and affection of her English half-brother. 10-12
- CRAWFORD, PHYLLIS. "Hello, the Boat," ill. by Edward Laning. Holt, 1938. A resourceful family journeys from Pittsburgh to Cincinnati in 1816 aboard a steamboat fitted out as a store. 9-11
- DALGLISH, ALICE. *The Bear on Hemlock Mountain*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Scribner, 1952.
- , *The Columbus Story* (see Bibliography, Chapter 18).
- , *The Courage of Sarah Noble*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Scribner, 1954.
- , *The 4th of July Story*, ill. by Marie Nonnast. Scribner, 1956.
- , *The Thanksgiving Story*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Scribner, 1954. 7-10
- DOUGLAS, EMILY. *Appleseed Farm*, ill. by Anne Vaughan. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1948. Ten-year-old Penny hears about a visit Johnny Appleseed once made to her family's Indiana farm. 8-10
- EDMONDS, WALTER D. *The Matchlock Gun*, ill. by Paul Lantz Dodd, 1941
- , *Tom Whipple*, ill. by Paul Lantz Dodd, 1942. 10-12
- FIELD, RACHEL. *Calico Bush*, ill. by Allen Lewis. Macmillan, 1931. 10-14
- FORBES, ESTHER. *Johnny Tremann*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Houghton, 1943. 12-14
- GENDRON, VAL. *The Fork in the Trail*, ill. by Sidney Quinn. Longmans, 1952. A young pioneer starts up a cattle trading post on the route to the West during the gold rush days. 11-14
- GRAY, ELIZABETH JANET. *Betty Marlowe of Charles Town* (1715), ill. by Loten Bartoo. Viking, 1936.
- , *Fair Adventure* (modern). Viking, 1940.
- , *Jane Hope* (1860). Viking, 1933.
- , *Meggy MacIntosh* (1775), ill. by Marguerite de Angeli. Viking, 1930.
- This is Elizabeth Gray's fine series about North Carolina. The period of each book is indicated. The series shows the changes in manners, customs, and problems of one region. 12-16
- HOFF, CAROL. *Johnny Texas*, ill. by Bob Meyers. Wilcox & Follett, 1950.
- , *Johnny Texas on the San Antonio Road*, ill. by Earl Sherwan Wilcox & Follett, 1953.
- These two stories follow the fortunes of a German immigrant family in Texas during the 1830's. In the first book, the mother's unhappiness almost causes the family to leave—a heartbreak for Johnny, who loves the new country. In the sequel, Johnny takes a wagonload of corn to Mexico, and faces serious dangers bringing the money back. Fine characterization. 9-12
- LAMPMAN, EVELYN. *Tree Wagon*, ill. by Robert Frankenberg Doubleday, 1953. 10-13
- LENSKI, LOIS. *Puritan Adventure*, ill. by author. Lipincott, 1944. Massachusetts is the scene of this vivid tale of Colonial times. A light-hearted young aunt from England visits a strict Puritan family, bringing gaiety and laughter with her. 11-14
- MCMEKIN, ISABEL. *Journey Cake*, ill. by Nicholas Panesi Messner, 1942. Six motherless children, in the care of an intrepid old free Negro woman, journey through the wilderness to join their father in Boone's Kentucky. 10-12
- MASON, MIRIAM. *Caroline and Her Kettle Named Maud*, ill. by Kathleen Voute. Macmillan, 1951.
- , *Little Jonathan*, ill. by George and Doris Hauman. Macmillan, 1944
- , *The Middle Sister*, ill. by Grace Paul. Macmillan, 1947.
- , *Susannah, the Pioneer Cow*, ill. by Maud and Miska Petersham. Macmillan, 1941
- , *Young Mr. Meeker and His Exciting Journey to Oregon*, ill. by Sandra James Bobbs, 1952, o.p.
- Easy-to-read pioneer stories full of humor and action. Sometimes the animals talk, which seems out of key with factual details. 8-10
- MEADER, STEPHEN W. *Boy with a Pack*, ill. by Edward Shenton. Harcourt, 1939. An exciting story of a young Yankee peddler.
- , *Jonathan Goes West* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- , *Ruler of the Wolves*, ill. by Edward Shenton. Harcourt, 1948. This story of boys held captive by Indians gives an unusually detailed picture of Indian life and individual Indians. The hero tastes cruelty and kindness, and finally manages to escape. 11-14
- , *Who Rides in the Dark?* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- MEADOWCROFT, ENID. *By Secret Railway*, ill. by Henry C. Fitz. Crowell, 1948. The story of a white boy's rescue of a freed Negro who had been carried to the South again illegally. 11-14
- MEIGS, CORNELIA. *Clearing Weather*, ill. by Frank Dobias Little, 1928, o.p.
- , *The Covered Bridge*, ill. by Marguerite de Angeli. Macmillan, 1936.
- , *Matter Simon's Garden*, ill. by John Rae. Macmillan, 1929.
- , *The New Moon*, new ed., ill. by Marguerite de Angeli. Macmillan, 1929.
- , *Swift Rivers*, ill. by Peter Hurd Little, 1937.
- , *The Vanished Island*, ill. by Dorothy Bayley. Macmillan, 1941.
- , *The Willow Whistle*, ill. by E. B. Smith. Macmillan, 1931.

— \* *Wind in the Chimney*, ill. by Louise Mansfield. Macmillan, 1934

All these historical novels are good, and those starred are especially popular. 10-14

ORTON, HELEN FULLER. *Treasure in the Little Trunk* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

SICKELS, ELEANOR. *In Calico and Crinoline* (see Bibliography, Chapter 18).

STEELE, WILLIAM O. *The Buffalo Knife*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Harcourt, 1952.

— *Tomahawks and Trouble*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Harcourt, 1955.

— *Wilderness Journey*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Harcourt, 1953.

— *Winter Danger*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Harcourt, 1954. 9-12

SWIFT, HILDEGARDE H. *Railroad to Freedom*, ill. by James Daugherty. Harcourt, 1932. A true story of a Negro slave who helped her people to freedom during the Civil War. 10-14

SWAIN, MARK. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

— *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

WILDER, LAURA INGALLS. *By the Shores of Silver Lake*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *Farmer Boy*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *Little House in the Big Woods*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *Little House on the Prairie*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *Little Town on the Prairie*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *The Long Winter*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *On the Banks of Plum Creek*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953.

— *These Happy Golden Years*, ill. by Garth Williams. Harper, 1953. 9-15

WILSON, HAZEL. *His Indian Brother*, ill. by Robert Henneberger. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1955. Based on a true incident of the 1800's is this story of Brad Potter, left alone in a Maine pioneer cabin and rescued from starvation by an Indian chief and his son. 10-14

## The ancient world

COE, FREDERICK. *Grown with Flint*, ill. by Robert Hallock. Crowell, 1950. Adventures of Hia and Ag, two Cro-Magnon boys, in their struggle for survival. 11-14

COOLIDGE, OLIVIA. *Egyptian Adventures*, ill. by Joseph Low Houghton, 1954. 12-16

FANCHIOTTI, MARGHERITA. *A Bow in the Cloud*, ill. by Moyra Leatham. Oxford, 1954. This reverent and imaginative story of Noah's Ark covers the period from the building of the Ark to the end of the flood. The story centers about three children who were among the rescued. 11-14

HAYS, WILLIAM PITCHFORD. *The Story of Valentine*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Coward McCann, 1956. A vivid story of one of the Roman Christian priests who, when imprisoned, achieved a miracle of faith.

A brief story with holiday reading possibilities. 9-12

JONES, RUTH FOSDICK. *Boy of the Pyramids; a Mystery of Ancient Egypt*, ill. by Dorothy Bayley Morse. Random, 1952. Ten-year-old Kaffe helps capture a thief who was stealing from a Pharaoh's tomb. An exciting story, set in the days of the building of pyramids. 10-12

LAWRENCE, ISABELLE. *The Gift of the Golden Cup*, ill. by Charles V. John. Bobbs, 1946. 11-14

— *Niko, Sculptor's Apprentice*, ill. by Arthur Marokvia. Viking, 1956. Athenian life in the days when the Parthenon was being built is vividly recreated in this story of the boy Niko, his noble slave Peron, and a lively family. Excitement and complications are increased with the advent of an undisciplined girl from Sparta. Pericles and Phidias move in and out of this sparkling tale. 9-12

— *The Theft of the Golden Ring*, ill. by Charles V. John. Bobbs, 1948. 11-14

MCGRAW, ELOISE. *Mata, Daughter of the Nile*. Coward McCann, 1953. 11-15

MORRISON, LUCILE. *The Lost Queen of Egypt*, ill. by Franz Geritz and Winifred Brunton. Lippincott, 1937. 12-14

SNEDEKER, CAROLINE DALE. *The Forgotten Daughter*, ill. by Dorothy Lathrop. Doubleday, 1933. A good tale and a thorough study of Roman life. 10-14

— *A Triumph for Flavius*, ill. by Cedric Rogers Lothrop, 1955. The story of a young Roman boy who, in compassion for his Greek slave and teacher, works to secure his freedom. Interesting background of ancient Rome and early Christian days and dangers. 8-11

— *The White Isle*, ill. by Fritz Kredel. Doubleday, 1940. An interesting picture of the stormy beginnings of the Christian era in Rome. 10-14

WINTERFELD, HENRY. *Detectives in Togas*, tr. by Richard and Clara Winston, ill. by Charlotte Kleinert. Harcourt, 1956. 10-13

## European historical fiction

BENNETT, JOHN. *Master Skylark*, ill. by Reginald Birch. Grosset, 1924 (first pub in 1897). A story of Shakespeare's day. 12-14

BUFF, MARY. *The Apple and the Arrow*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Houghton, 1951. The stirring story of William Tell and his son Walter, with many dramatic illustrations by Swiss-born Conrad Buff. 9-12

BULLA, CLYDE. *The Sword in the Tree*, ill. by Paul Galdone. Crowell, 1956. King Arthur administers justice at the plea of young Shan, whose uncle has cast his father into prison and seized the castle. 8-10

CHUTE, MARCHETTE. *The Innocent Wayfarer*, ill. by author. Dutton, 1955.

— *The Wonderful Winter*, ill. by Grace Golden. Dutton, 1954. 11-14

COBLENTZ, CATHERINE CATE. *The Beggars' Penny*, ill. by Hilda van Stockum. Longmans, 1943. A fine historical story of the siege of Leyden by the Spanish. 12-14

DE ANGELI, MARGUERITE. *Black Fox of Lorne*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1956. The twins, Jan and Brus, are delighted to go "a-Viking" with their

- father, but storms and shipwreck land them in the hands of a Scotch villain, Gavin the Black Fox. The father is killed, and the twins survive by keeping well apart and interchanging places in castle and croft. Their adventures carry them all over tenth-century Scotland. A complex, difficult story, beautifully illustrated. 8-12
- , *The Door in the Wall*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1949. 8-11
- DIX, BEULAH M. *Merrylips*, ill. by F. T. Merrill and Anne Cooper. Macmillan, 1925. The clash between Cavaliers and Roundheads makes an exciting background for this adventure story. 10-14
- EVERNDEN, MARGERY. *Knight of Florence*, ill. by Raffaello Busoni. Random, 1950. The art of Florence in the Middle Ages as it affects the life of a noble family whose eldest son aspires to be an artist. 10-12
- GIBSON, KATHARINE. *Oak Tree House*, ill. by Vera Bock. Longmans, 1936. An old couple build a tree house in the middle of the King's Highway, save the King's messenger, and receive the tree legally for life from the King. 10-12
- GRAY, ELIZABETH JANET. *Adam of the Road*, ill. by Robert Lawson. Viking, 1942. 12-14
- HARNETT, CYNTHIA. *Nicholas and the Wool-Pack*, ill. by author. Putnam, 1953. Young Nicholas Fetterlock discovers the source of the mysterious wool thefts which were bringing disgrace to his father. A colorful story of the medieval wool industry. 11-15
- HAWES, CHARLES B. *Dark Frigate*, ill. by Anton Otto Fischer. Little, 1934. An exciting sea tale in the days of the Stuarts. 12-14
- HODGES, C. WALTER. *Columbus Sails*, ill. by author. Coward McCann, 1950. This well liked story of Columbus and his voyages is fiction based on facts and is tremendously moving. 11-14
- KELLY, ERIC P. *The Blacksmith of Vilno*, ill. by Angela Pruszyńska. Macmillan, 1930. An exciting story of the partition of Poland. 12-14
- , *The Trumpeter of Krakow*, ill. by Angela Pruszyńska. Macmillan, 1928. Difficult to read but an absorbing story. Newbery Medal. 12-14
- KENT, LOUISE ANDREWS. *He Went with Magellan*, ill. by Paul Quinn. Houghton, 1943. 12-14
- , *He Went with Marco Polo*, ill. by C. L. Baldwin and Paul Quinn. Houghton, 1935. 12-14
- , *He Went with Vasco Da Gama*, ill. by Paul Quinn. Houghton, 1938. 12-14
- Fun and adventures, with enough background to make the books good historical fiction. 10-14
- MAGOON, MARIAN AUSTIN. *Little Dusty Foot*, ill. by Christine Price. Longmans, 1948. Absorbing story of the far-traveled merchants of Charlemagne's reign, and of young Rauf who shared their adventures. 10-14
- PYLE, HOWARD. *Men of Iron*, ill. by author. Harper, 1891. 10-14
- , *Otto of the Silver Hand*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1888. 10-14
- STEIN, EVALEEN. *Gabriel and the Hour Book*, ill. by Adelaide Everhart. Page, 1906. A charming story of life in the reign of Louis XII in France. A young peasant boy works on the illuminated hour book which is to be a gift from the king to his bride. 10-14
- VARBLE, RACHEL M. *Pepys's Boy*, ill. by Kurt Werch. Doubleday, 1955. The England of the Restoration and of Samuel Pepys's diary is portrayed in all its splendor and misery in this story of Toby who works as a page boy for Pepys. This is a fascinating adventure tale. 12-14

## Stories about modern children of other lands

### Forerunners

- DODGE, MARY MAPES. *Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates*, ill. by George Wharton Edwards. Scribner, 1926. 10-12
- SPYRI, JOHANNA. *Heidi*, ill. by Agnes Tait. Lippincott, 1948. 10-12

### Africa

- DAVIS, NORMAN. *Picken's Exciting Summer*, ill. by Winslade. Oxford, 1950. 8-11
- , *Picken's Great Adventure*, ill. by Winslade. Oxford, 1949. 8-11
- , *Picken's Treasure Hunt*, ill. by Winslade. Oxford, 1955. 8-11
- Exciting tales of a Gambian chief's son and his pet monkey, Benji, who go seeking adventure in the jungle and invariably find it. 8-11
- ENRIGHT, ELIZABETH. *Kintu*, ill. by author. Rinehart, 1935, o.p. In *Time for True Tales and Almost True*, ed. by May Hill Arbutnot. Scott, 1953. 8-11
- GATTI, ATTILIO. *Kamanda, an African Boy*, ill. with photographs. McBride Co, 1953. A winning ten-year-old boy of the Belgian Congo accompanies one of the author's expeditions. 10-12
- , *Saranga, the Pygmy*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Scribner, 1939. This story is an unusual account of the life of a little known people. 11-14
- MIRSKY, REBA. *Seven Grandmothers*, ill. by W. T. Mats. Wilcox & Follett, 1956. 9-12
- , *Thirty One Brothers and Sisters*, ill. by W. T. Mats. Wilcox & Follett, 1952. 9-12
- Stories of the African veld which give an unusually vivid picture of family life. In *Thirty One Brothers and Sisters*, Nomusa, the daughter of a Zulu chief, reluctantly abandons her tomboy rôle for more womanly duties. In the sequel, Nomusa decides to train for professional nursing so she can help her people most effectively. 9-12

### China and Japan

- BRO, MARGUERITE. *Su-Mei's Golden Year*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Doubleday, 1950. It is Su-Mei and her friends of the younger generation who save their Chinese village from famine when the wheat crop is endangered. 11-14
- BUCK, PEARL. *The Big Wave*, ill. by Hiroshige and Hokusai. Day, 1948. Jiya leaves the coast after a tidal wave destroys his home and the entire fishing village. When he is grown, he courageously returns to his traditional occupation. There is a heroic quality in the telling which makes this Japanese story a memorable one. 9-13

CREEKMORE, RAYMOND. *Fujio*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1951. Small Fujio achieves his great desire, to climb to the top of the volcano, Fujiyama. 7-9

HANDFORTH, THOMAS. *Mei Li*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1938. The pleasant adventures of a little Chinese girl at the Fair. A picture book which won the Caldecott Medal for 1939. 5-8

LATTIMORE, ELEANOR. *Little Pear*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1931.

—, *Little Pear and His Friends*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1934

—, *Little Pear and the Rabbits*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1956. 6-10

LEWIS, ELIZABETH. *Ho-ming, Girl of New China*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Winston, 1934. A lively Chinese girl begins her education to become a public-health nurse

—, *To Beat a Tiger One Needs a Brother's Help*, ill. by John Heuhnergarth. Winston, 1956 12-16

—, *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Winston, 1932. Newbery Medal. 10-14

LIU, BEATRICE. *Little Wu and the Watermelons*, ill. by Graham Peck. Wilcox & Follett, 1954. Little Wu worked long and hard in his secret melon patch in order to buy his mother a handsome hair ornament. The story gives a fine picture of Chinese family unity. Colorful illustrations. 8-10

MÜHLENWEG, FRITZ. *Big Tiger and Christian*, ill. by Raffaele Busoni. Pantheon Bks., 1952. An English and a Chinese boy cross the Gobi Desert on a dangerous mission for a Chinese general. Here are nearly six hundred pages packed with adventure, people, and strange places. A rare treat for the superior reader 12—

REISS, MALCOLM. *China Boat Boy*, ill. by Jeanette Wong. Lippincott, 1954. The possession of a rare cormorant used in fishing, a father absent and injured in war, and the mother and children victimized by a ruthless moneylender add up to an exciting tale of a Chinese river boat family during World War II 10-14

TREFFINGER, CAROLYN. *Li Lan, Lad of Courage*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1947. Story of a Chinese boy who compensates for his fear of the sea by growing rice on a lonely mountain top. He learns of a new way of life for himself and his people. 9-12

WOOD, ESTHER. *Silk and Satin Lane*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Longmans, 1939. 9-12

YASHIMA, TARO [pseud. for Jun Iwamatsu]. *Crow Boy*, ill. by author. Viking, 1955.

—, *Plenty to Watch*, ill. by author. Viking, 1954.

YASHIMA, TARO and MITSU [pseud. for Jun and Tomoe Iwamatsu]. *The Village Tree*, ill. by authors. Viking, 1953 6-9

YOUNG, EVELYN. *Wu and Lu and Li*, ill. by author. Oxford, 1939. Picture book of Chinese toddlers, appealing and beautiful. Older boys and girls can study the costumes and copy them for use in dramatizations. 5-6

Holland

DEJONG, MEINDELT. *Dirk's Dog, Bello*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Harper, 1939 10-12

—, *Shadrach*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1953. The story of a Dutch boy's devotion to his small black rabbit.

—, *Smoke above the Lane*, ill. by Gerard Goode-now. Harper, 1951.

—, *The Wheel on the School*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1954. 9-12

DODGE, MARY MAPES. *Hans Brinker; or the Silver Skates* (see Forerunners).

SEYMOUR, ALTA HALVERSON. *Kaatje and the Christmas Compass*, ill. by W. T. Mars. Wilcox & Follett, 1954. Impulsive Kaatje loses her brother's compass when she falls into the canal. She is rescued by a family on a cheese boat, and all ends happily. Holiday customs and modern life are well described. 8-11

VAN STOCKUM, HILDA. *Andries*, ill. by author. Viking, 1942. The big Dykstra family make life happier for orphaned Andries, who is lonely in his bachelor uncle's gloomy old home. 9-11

## India

BATCHLOR, JULIE. *A Cap for Mul Chand*, ill. by Corinne V. Dillon. Harcourt, 1950. In spite of interference from the village bully, eleven-year-old Mul Chand finally earns the money for his longed-for cap. 8-10

BOTHWELL, JEAN. *The Little Flute Player*, ill. by Margaret Ayer. Morrow, 1949. Minor disasters stalk Tekka, the little village flute player, and grow into tragedy when famine comes. The ten-year-old boy takes his father's place and saves his family from starvation. 9-12

RANKIN, LOUISE. *Daughter of the Mountains*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Viking, 1948. Tells of the journey of a little Tibetan village girl to far-off Calcutta in search of her stolen puppy. 10-13

SINGH, REGINALD LAL, and ELQISE LOWNSBERY. *Gift of the Forest*, ill. by Anne Vaughan. Longmans, 1942. In this distinguished story of rural India, Young Bim, a Hindu boy, finds a tiger cub and cares for it until he is forced to return it to the jungle. 11-14

## Mexico and South America

BEIM, LORRAINE and JERROLD. *The Burro That Had a Name*, ill. by Howard Simon. Harcourt, 1939. An amusing story of a boy's attachment for a burro. 6-9

BUFF, MARY and CONRAD. *Magic Maize* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

BULLA, CLYDE. *The Poppy Seeds* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).

CLARK, ANN NOLAN. (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

—, *Secret of the Andes* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

DESMOND, ALICE CURTIS. *The Lucky Llama*, ill. by Wilfrid Bronson. Macmillan, 1939. A charming picture of boy and llamas. 10-12

GARRETT, HELEN. *Angelo the Naughty One*, ill. by Leo Politi. Viking, 1944. The amusing reform of a small Mexican boy who did not like to take baths. 6-9

GILL, RICHARD C. and HELEN HOKE. *Paco Goes to*



*the Fair*, ill. by Ruth Gannett. Holt, 1940. Primitive Indian ways. 9-12

HADER, BERTA and ELMER. *Story of Pancho and the Bull with the Crooked Tail*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1942, o.p. A very funny story of a little Mexican boy's accidental capture of a ferocious bull. Pictures in brilliant colors. 6-9

MORROW, ELIZABETH. *The Painted Pig*, ill. by René d'Hatnoncourt. Knopf, 1930. A slight but pleasant story with good pictures. 7-10

PARISH, HELEN RAND. *At the Palace Gates*, ill. by Leo Politi. Viking, 1949. Appealing adventure story of a small Peruvian boy living on his own in Lima. His fortunate overhearing of a plot against the governor is rewarded by a chance to gratify his greatest ambition. 9-11

RHOADS, DOROTHY M. *The Corn Grows Ripe*, ill. by Jean Charlot. Viking, 1956. The Mayan Indians today live in Yucatan much as their ancestors did, following ancient customs and beliefs. Twelve-year-old Tigre, spoiled and lazy, grows up suddenly when his father is injured. 9-11

SAWYER, RUTH. *The Least One*, ill. by Leo Politi. Viking, 1941. A touching little tale of a boy and his donkey. 8-10

TARSHIS, ELIZABETH K. *The Village That Learned to Read*, ill. by Harold Haydon Houghton, 1941. A robust story with an amusing moral. 10-12

#### Pacific Islands

SPEERY, ARMSTRONG. *Call It Courage*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1940. 10-12

WOOD, ESTHER. *Pedro's Coconut Skater*, ill. by author. Longman, 1938. Community life in the rural Philippines. 8-12

#### Switzerland

BUFF, MARY and CONRAD Kobi. *A Boy of Switzerland*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Viking, 1936. A quiet story of a modern Swiss boy's everyday work and play, marked by one thrilling episode in which the boy leads his herd through a storm. 8-12

CHONZ, SELINA. *A Bell for Uri*, 2nd ed., ill. by Alois Carigiet. Oxford, 1953. One of the most beautiful picture-stories to come out of Europe, this is also the exciting story of a small Swiss boy determined to have the largest bell to ring in the spring procession. 6-9

GAGGIN, EVA R. *An Ear for Uncle Emil*, ill. by Kate Seredy. Viking, 1939. A very long but humorous story about a little girl who manages to have her masculine doll, "Uncle Emil," transformed into a coquettish female. 10-12

KAROLYI, ERNA M. *A Summer to Remember*, ill. by author. McGraw, 1949. Margitka, a little Hungarian girl, frail after years of war, regains her health as the guest of a kindly Swiss family. 10-12

SPYRI, JOHANNA. *Heidi* (see Foreword).

ULLMAN, JAMES RAMSEY. *Banner in the Sky*. Lippincott, 1954. 12-16

#### Other countries

ANGELO, VALENTI. *The Marble Fountain*, ill. by author. Viking, 1951

—, *Nino*, ill. by author. Viking, 1938.

Both these stories offer a background of Italian village life written with rare feeling. *Nino* is the story of a little boy's happy time before the family emigrate to America at the turn of the century. *The Marble Fountain*, the postwar recovery of a bombed village is aided when the children recover the lost statue of Saint Francis. 11-1

ARASON, STEINGRIMUR. *Smoky Bay*, ill. by Gertrud Howe. Macmillan, 1942. The story of an Icelandic boy whose wish to visit America finally comes true. An interesting story in an unusual setting. 10-1

BENARY-ISBERT, MARGOT. *The Ark*, tr. by Richard and Clara Winston. Harcourt, 1953. 12-1

—, *Castle on the Border*, tr. by Richard and Clara Winston. Harcourt, 1956. 14-11

—, *Rowan Farm*, tr. by Richard and Clara Winston. Harcourt, 1954. 12-1

BISHOP, CLAIRE HUCHET. *All Alone*, ill. by Fedor Rjankovsky. Viking, 1953. Villagers in the French Alps learn to work together when two children herding in the mountains, are isolated by an avalanche. 9-11

—, *Pancakes Paris*, ill. by Georges Schreiber. Viking, 1947. A half-starved postwar French child receives a miraculous package of American pancake mix. How he meets two American soldiers and gets the recipe makes a heart-warming tale. 8-12

JONES, ELIZABETH ORTON. *Maminka's Children*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1940. The story is not important, but is written with great charm and tenderness. This tale of Czechoslovakia has lovely pictures and childlike humor. 10-12

LINDQUIST, WILLIS. *Burma Boy*, ill. by Nicholas Mordvinoff. McGraw, 1953. Suspense and atmosphere combine to make this an absorbing story of a boy's search for a lost elephant. 9-11

LIPKIND, WILLIAM. *Boy with a Harpoon*, ill. by Nicholas Mordvinoff. Harcourt, 1952. Little Seal, an Alaskan Eskimo boy, earns the right to accompany the men on a hunting expedition. 8-11

LOWNSBERRY, ELOISE. *Maria the Doll*, ill. by Marya Werten. Longmans, 1946. A heart-warming story of prewar Poland tells of a lonely little farm girl and the doll that shares all her adventures. 8-10

NANKIVELL, JOICE M. *Tales of Christophoros*, ill. by Panos Ghikas Houghton, 1954. Christophoros, the young goatherd, lives near Mount Athos in Greece. His adventures, told with humor, give a fine picture of the life and people. 10-14

RUGH, BELLE. *Crytal Mountain* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

SEREDY, KATE. *The Good Master*, ill. by author. Viking, 1935. 10-14

—, *The Singing Tree*, ill. by author. Viking, 1939. 10-14

SHANNON, MONICA. *Dobry*, ill. by Atanas Katchamakoff. Viking, 1934. 11-14

UNNERSTAD, EDITH. *The Sautepan Journey*, ill. by Louis Slobodkin. Macmillan, 1951. The Larsson children, all seven of them, spend a wonderful summer in the traveling caravan, helping father sell his sauteupsans through Sweden. 9-12

WILHELMSON, CARL. *Speed of the Reindeer*, ill. by Raffaello Busoni. Viking, 1954. An unusual tale of life among the Lapps of the Arctic Circle, height-

ened by suspense. When the most beautiful deer in the herd disappears, young Mikko sets out to solve the mystery. 10-14

## Chapter 17 Animal stories

For other stories about animals, see also Bibliographies for Chapters 14 and 15.

### Picture-stories

- ANDERSEN, HANS CHRISTIAN. *The Ugly Duckling* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 ANDERSON, CLARENCE. *Billy and Blaze*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1936  
 —. *Blaze and the Forest Fire*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1938  
 —. *Blaze and the Gypsies*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1937.  
 —. *Blaze Finds the Trail*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1950 Billy and Blaze, lost in the woods during a storm, have an exciting ride home. 5-8  
 BROWN, MARGARET WISE. *The Runaway Bunny* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 BRUNHOFF, JEAN DE. *The Story of Babar* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 DELAFIELD, CELIA. *Mrs Mallard's Ducklings*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Lothrop, 1946. A beautiful picture book with brief text of the seasonal cycle from egg to winter flight. 5-8  
 DENNIS, MORGAN BURLAP, ill. by author. Viking, 1945. A worthless farm dog suddenly proves himself by helping to capture an escaped circus bear. 6-8  
 ETS, MARIE HALL. *Mister Penny* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 —. *Mister Penny's Race Horse* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 —. *Mr T W Anthony Woo* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 —. *Play with Me* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 FATIO, LOUISE. *The Happy Lion* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 FLACK, MARJORIE. *Angus and the Cat*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1931  
 —. *Angus and the Ducks*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1930  
 —. *Angus Lost*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1932. 4-7  
 —. *Ask Mr. Bear* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 —. *Restless Robin*, ill. by author. Houghton 1937. Mr Robin starts north in February and finally arrives in New Hampshire with the spring. 6-8  
 —. *Story about Ping*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Viking, 1933  
 —. *Tim Tadpole and the Great Bullfrog*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1934 5-8  
 —. *Topsy*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1935, o.p.  
 —. *Wag Tail Bess*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1933.  
 FRISKEY, MARGARET. *Seven Daring Ducks* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 FRITZ, JEAN. *Fish Head*, ill. by Marc Simont. Coward McCann, 1934. Fish Head was a scarred old

- wharf cat full of fight and swagger. By accident, he went to sea and found that it was the life for him! 7-10  
 HADER, BERTA and ELMER. *The Big Snow*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1948. Beautiful pictures of small animals preparing for a winter that was worse than they dreamed. With the aid of human friends they survive. Caldecott Medal. 6-9  
 —. *Squirrelly of Willow Hill*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1950. A lost baby squirrel winters luxuriously in the McGinty home, and in the spring returns to his own world. 7-9  
 HEYWARD, DU BOSE. *The Country Bunny and the Little Gold Shoes* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 HOGAN, INEZ. *The Bear Twins*, ill. by author. Dutton, 1935. 4-7  
 LATHROP, DOROTHY. *Bouncing Betty*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1936. 6-10  
 —. *Hide and Go Seek*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1938. 7-10  
 —. *Who Goes There?* ill. by author. Macmillan, 1935. 6-10  
 LEAF, MUNRO. *The Story of Ferdinand*, ill. by Robert Lawson. Viking, 1936. 5—  
 MCCLOSKEY, ROBERT. *Blueberries for Sal* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).  
 —. *Make Way for Ducklings* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).  
 NEWBERRY, CLARE. *April's Kittens*, ill. by author. Harper, 1940. When April's cat Sheba has kittens, April's father agrees to move from a one-cat to a two-cat apartment.  
 —. *Babette*, ill. by author. Harper, 1937.  
 —. *Barkis*, ill. by author. Harper, 1938.  
 —. *Marshmallow*, ill. by author. Harper, 1942.  
 —. *Mittens*, ill. by author. Harper, 1936.  
 —. *Percy, Polly and Pete*, ill. by author. Harper, 1952.  
 —. *Smudge*, ill. by author. Harper, 1948. A mischievous kitten grows into a cat. 5-8  
 POTTER, BEATRIX. *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 ROBINSON, TOM. *Buttons*, ill. by Peggy Bacon. Viking, 1938. A gay story, with a happy ending, of a battle between an old cat and a mother robin.  
 —. *Greylock and the Robins*, ill. by Robert Lawson. Viking, 1946 6-9  
 SEUSS, DR. [pseud. for Theodore Seuss Geisel]. *Horton Hatches the Egg* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 SMITH, E. BOYD. *Chicken World*, ill. by author. Putnam, 1910, o.p. 4-10  
 SOJO, TOBA. *The Animal Frolic*, ill. with reproductions from the drawings of Kakuyu. Putnam, 1954. 6-8  
 WARD, LYND. *The Biggest Bear*, ill. by author, Houghton, 1952. 5-8  
 WILL and NICHOLAS [pseud. for William Lipkind and Nicholas Mordvinoff]. *Finders Keepers* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).  
 —. *The Two Reds*, ill. by Nicholas Harcourt, 1950. The two Reds, boy and cat, both city dwellers, were enemies because they yearned for the same goldfish, but for different reasons. How they became friends is hilariously told and pictured. 5-8

## Books for readers: eight-eleven

- ANDERSON, CLARENCE. *High Courage*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1941 10-13
- , *Salute*, ill. by author. Macmillan, 1940. 9-12
- BELL, THELMA HARRINGTON. *Yaller-Eye*, ill. by Corydon Bell. Viking, 1951. Through Randy's negligence his cat loses a foot, and there is conflict between father and son as to whether the cat should be spared. A good story of mountaineer life and of a boy's love for his pet. 8-11
- BINNS, ARCHIE. *Sea Pup* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- BROCK, EMMA. *Plug-Horse Derby*, ill. by author. Knopf, 1955. Nancy is quite certain that her sturdy farm horse, Plow Boy, will win the race at the County Fair after all the training she has given him for the big event. 8-11
- BUFF, MARY and CONRAD. *Dash and Dart*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Viking, 1942.
- , *Hurry, Skurry and Flurry*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Viking, 1954. 5-8
- BULLA, CLYDE. *Star of Wild Horse Canyon*, ill. by Grate Paull. Crowell, 1953. The disappearance of the wild white horse which Danny has so carefully trained creates a mystery in this easy to-read western story. 7-9
- CARROLL, RUTH and LATROBE. *Beanie* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- , *Tough Enough* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- , *Tough Enough's Trip* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- COGGINS, HERBERT. *Busby & Co.*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. McGraw, 1952. Keeping a beaver as a pet is not easy, as Jerry Gardner soon realizes when the beaver's instinct to chew creates situations both funny and tense. 8-10
- COOPER, PAGE. *Amigo, Circus Horse*, ill. by Henry Pitz. World, 1955. 12-16
- , *Pat's Harmony*, ill. by Oliver Grimley. World Pub., 1952. Pat reconditions and trains a half-starved, injured horse. There is an acute conflict between Pat and her mother which is happily resolved when the horse and Pat qualify as great jumpers. 10-14
- DEJONG, MEINDERT. *The Little Cow and the Turtle*, ill. by Maurice Sendak. Harper, 1955. This story of a friendly little cow who follows her turtle companion onto the railroad tracks reaches a powerful climax as both barely escape an oncoming train. A beautifully written book with a fascinating rhythmic quality for reading aloud. 8-12
- ENGELHARD, GEORGIA. *Peterls and the Mountain*, ill. by Madeleine Gekiere Lippincott, 1954. No one really knows what made Peterls, the cat, climb the Matterhorn, but climb it he did, with the aid of a friendly guide. An amusing tale based on a true incident. 8-12
- GALL, ALICE and FLEMING CREW. *Flat Tail*, ill. by W. Langdon Kihn. Oxford, 1935
- , *Ringtail*, ill. by James Reid. Oxford, 1933.
- , *Splasher*, ill. by Elsie Bostelmann. Oxford, 1945. A food is a great adventure for a young muskrat and his friends.
- , *Wagtail*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Oxford, 1932. 8-10
- GATES, DORIS. *Little Vic*, ill. by Kate Seredy. Viking, 1951. When Pony River, a Negro boy, sees Little Vic, he believes the colt will be as great as his sire, Man O' War. The boy endures every hardship willingly in his devotion to the colt. A moving, well told story. 9-12
- GRAHAM, KENNETH. *The Wind in the Willows* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- HENRY, MARGUERITE. *Born to Trot*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1950. The true story of Ben and Gib White, trainer and owner of a famous trotting mare, with a good deal of history of trotting races.
- , *Brightly of the Grand Canyon*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1953.
- , *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1954.
- , *King of the Wind*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1948.
- , *Nifty of Chincoteague*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1947.
- , *Sea Star; Orphan of Chincoteague*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Rand McNally, 1949. 9-14
- JOHNSON, MARGARET and HELEN. *Barney of the North*, ill. by authors. Harcourt, 1939.
- , *Black Bruce*, ill. by authors. Harcourt, 1938. 7-10
- , *The Smallest Puppy*, ill. by authors. Harcourt, 1940. The smallest puppy of a litter of Eskimo dogs makes good as the lead dog on the sled despite his size. 6-8
- KIPLING, RUDYARD. *Just So Stories* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- LAWSON, ROBERT. *Rabbit Hill* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- , *The Tough Winter* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- LIPPINCOTT, JOSEPH WHARTON. *Grey Squirrel*, ill. by George F. Mason. Lippincott, 1954.
- , *Little Red, the Fox*, ill. by George F. Mason. Lippincott, 1953.
- , *Long Horn, Leader of the Deer*, ill. by George F. Mason. Lippincott, 1955.
- , *Perummon Jim, the Possum*, ill. by George F. Mason. Lippincott, 1955.
- , *Striped Coat, the Skunk*, ill. by George F. Mason. Lippincott, 1954.
- Authentic life stories of native animals 9-11
- REYNOLDS, BARBARA. *Pepper*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Scribner, 1952. This amusing story of Alec's attempt to domesticate a baby raccoon, and the complications that develop as Pepper matures, is especially popular with boys.
- RIEVELD, JANE. *Wild Dog*, ill. by author. Wilcox & Follett, 1953. Jerry's beloved Eskimo puppy, the gift of a Canadian Indian, develops hunting instincts that are a menace in a farm community, and Jerry faces the hard decision of returning him to his natural environment. 10-13
- ROUNDS, GLEN. *The Blind Colt*, ill. by author. Holiday, 1941.
- , *Stolen Pony*, ill. by author. Holiday, 1948.
- Two stories with a background of the Dakota Bad-

lands. With the care and training given by a ten-year-old boy, the blind colt earns his right to live. The sequel tells how the pony was stolen by horse thieves and then abandoned, to make his way home with the aid of a faithful dog. Written with distinctive simplicity. 9-12

SALTEN, FELIX. *Bambi*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Grosset, 1931.

— *Bambi's Children*, tr. by Barthold Fles, ill. by Erna Pinner. Grosset, 1948. 10-14

SNOW, DOROTHEA. *Come, Chucky, Come*, ill. by Joshua Tolford. Houghton, 1952. Lonnie's pet woodchuck has such remarkable talents that his loving owner is torn between keeping him or selling him to buy a longed-for fiddle. Lively, humorous illustrations. 8-10

STONG, PHIL. *Honk: the Moose*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Dodd, 1955. 9-10

TOMPKINS, JANE. *The Polar Bear Twins*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Lippincott, 1937.

WHITE, E. B. *Charlotte's Web* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).

### Books for readers: twelve and older

CLARK, DENIS. *Black Lightning*, ill. by C. Gifford Ambler. Viking, 1954. *Black Lightning*, a rare black leopard of Ceylon, regains his jungle freedom after harsh captivity in a shabby little circus. An exciting and well-written wild animal story. 12-16

— *Boomer*, ill. by C. Gifford Ambler. Viking, 1955. An absorbing tale of an Australian kangaroo, orphaned and adopted as a household pet, who later returns to the wild and becomes a leader of his kind. 12-16

GEORGE, JOHN and JEAN. *Bubo, the Great Horned Owl*, ill. by Jean George. Dutton, 1954.

— *Masked Prowler; the Story of a Raccoon*, ill. by Jean George. Dutton, 1950.

— *Meeph, the Pet Skunk*, ill. by Jean George. Dutton, 1952.

— *Vivon, the Mink*, ill. by Jean George. Dutton, 1949.

— *Vulpes, the Red Fox*, ill. by Jean George. Dutton, 1948. 11-14

JAMES, WILL. *Smoky, the Cow Horse*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1926. 11-16

KIPLING, RUDYARD. *The Jungle Book*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Doubleday, 1932. Ill. by Fritz Eichenberg. Grosset, 1950. 12-14

KJELGAARD, JIM. *Big Red*, ill. by Bob Kuha. Holiday, 1956

— *Irish Red, Son of Big Red*. Holiday, 1951.

— *Outlaw Red, Son of Big Red*. Holiday, 1953.

— *Snow Dog*, ill. by Jacob Landau. Holiday, 1948. 11-14

KNIGHT, ERIC. *Lassie Come Home*, ill. by Marguerite Kirmse. Winston, 1940. Lassie, the collie dog, had to be sold because the Yorkshire collier's family was impoverished. The dog's loyalty impelled him to journey back four hundred miles, from Scotland, and his return brought good fortune to the family. 10-16

LIERS, EMIL. *An Otter's Story*, ill. by Tony Palazzo. Viking, 1953. 10-13

LIPPINCOTT, JOSEPH WHARTON. *The Phantom Deer*, ill. by Paul Bransom. Lippincott, 1954.

— *The Waboo Bobcat*, ill. by Paul Bransom. Lippincott, 1950.

— *Wilderness Champion*, ill. by Paul Bransom. Lippincott, 1944. 12-15

MCMECKIN, ISABEL. *Kentucky Derby Winner*, ill. by Corinne Dillon. McKay, 1949. A boy-centered horse story of unusual value. It concerns young Jacky Spratt and his devotion to Aristides, the horse which eventually won the first Kentucky Derby. Fine people, good horse lore, and considerable humor make this a memorable story for young readers. 9-13

MONTGOMERY, RUTHERFORD. *Kildee House*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Doubleday, 1949. Story of an elderly would-be hermit who, building a house in the redwood forest, soon finds it filled with small animals and visited by warring children. The tragicomic episodes make this a nature story of unusual sensitivity and beauty. 10-13

MUKERJI, DHAN GOPAL. *Gay-Neck*, ill. by Boris Artzybasheff. Dutton, 1927. Gay-Neck's training as a carrier pigeon in India made him valuable as a messenger in France during the war. Newbery Medal, 1928. 11-14

— *Hari, the Jungle Lad*, ill. by Morgan Stine-metz. Dutton, 1924.

— *Kari, the Elephant*, ill. by J. E. Allen. Dutton, 1922. 11-14

These two stories of East India are rich in atmosphere. The first book is the story of a boy of the jungle and how his meeting with Kari brings good fortune to his family. The second book tells of elephant life and adventure.

O'BRIEN, JACK. *Silver Chief, Dog of the North*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Winston, 1933. Silver Chief, half wolf and half husky, is trained by Jim Thorne of the Canadian Mounted Police, and heroically shares his master's adventures in the wild Northwest. 10-14

O'HARA, MARY [pseud for Mary Sture-Vasa]. *My Friend Flicka*, ill. by Eleanor Iselin Mason. Lippincott, 1955. 12—

— *Thunderhead*. Lippincott, 1943. 14—

— *Green Grass of Wyoming*. Lippincott, 1946. 12—

RAWLINGS, MARJORIE KINNAN. *The Yearling*, ill. by N. C. Wyeth. Scribner, 1938. 12—

STREET, JAMES. *Good-Bye, My Lady* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

WALDECK, THEODORE J. *Lions on the Hunt*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Viking, 1942. A young lion becomes the leader of his pack, hunted by the people of a Zulu village on the South African veldt. 11-15

— *On Safari*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Viking, 1940.

— *The White Panther*, ill. by Kurt Wiese. Viking, 1941. 11-15

WRISTON, HILDRETH T. *Show Lamb*, ill. by Peter Burchard. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953. Chad Warner secretly tagged the lamb he had chosen to win a ribbon at the Tunbridge Fair, and this marking later helped catch a thief. A fine story of life on a Vermont sheep farm over a century ago, it gives young readers a taste of rural New England. 10-13

## Chapter 18 Biography

### Collections of biographical sketches for children

BAKELESS, KATHERINE. *Story-Lives of American Composers*. Lippincott, 1933.

— *Story-Lives of Great Composers*. Lippincott, 1933.

For each collection, nineteen composers have been selected. The books give good musical representation both here and abroad. 12-15

BEARD, CHARLES AUSTIN. *The Presidents in American History*. Messner, 1953. Offers good historical background for each presidential career. 12-16

BENÉT, LAURA. *Famous American Poets*, ill. with photographs. Dodd, 1950. Over twenty poets both recent and past are introduced in brief biographies. 11-14

COTTIER, JOSEPH. *Heroes of Civilization*, ill. by Forest W. Orr. Little, 1931. Among the thirty-five famous people living in different countries and at different periods are: Marco Polo, Madame Curie, Edward Jenner, and Albert Einstein. 11-14

DAUGHERTY, SONIA. *Ten Brave Men*, ill. by James Daugherty. Lippincott, 1951. Good accounts of such national heroes as Roger Williams, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, and Andrew Jackson. 11-15

— *Ten Brave Women*, ill. by James Daugherty. Lippincott, 1953. 11-15

KELSEY, VERA. *Young Men So Daring*. Bobbs, 1956. Entertaining brief biographies of fur traders who helped develop the western frontier; includes Peter Pond, Manuel Lisa, John Jacob Astor, and Jim Bridger. 11-15

KUNITZ, STANLEY, and HOWARD HAYCRAFT, eds. *The Junior Book of Authors* (see Bibliography, Chapter 2). 12—

MCCONNELL, JANE and BURT. *First Ladies*. Crowell, 1953. 12—

MONTGOMERY, ELIZABETH RIDER. *The Story Behind Great Books*, ill. by Friedebald Druhas. Dodd, 1946. 12—

— *The Story Behind Great Stories*, ill. by Elnore Blaisdell. Dodd, 1947. 12—

— *The Story Behind Modern Books*. Dodd, 1949. Short sketches about authors and illustrators of children's books, both classic and recent. 11—

PETERSHAM, MAUD and MISKA. *Story of the Presidents of the United States of America*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1953. Generously illustrated introductory sketches. 8-11

RICHARDSON, BEN. *Great American Negroes*, rev. by William A. Fahey, ill. by Robert Hallock. Crowell, 1956. Vivid accounts of twenty Negroes who have overcome obstacles and who have contributed to American culture in many fields. 12-16

SICKLES, ELEANOR. *In Calico and Crinoline, True Stories of American Women, 1608-1865*, ill. by Ilse Bischoff. Viking, 1935. 11-16

SIMON, CHARLIE MAY. *Art in the New Land*, ill. by James McDonald. Dutton, 1945. Stories of famous American artists from Benjamin West to Grant Wood, with illustrations and descriptions of their work. 12-14

### Biographies of figures in American history

See also Collections of biographical sketches and Bibliography for Chapter 16.

F stands for historical fiction.

AULAIRE, INGRID and EDGAR D'. *Abraham Lincoln*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1939.

— *Benjamin Franklin*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1950.

— *Buffalo Bill*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1952.

— *Columbus*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1955.

— *George Washington*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1936.

— *Leif the Lucky*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1951.

— *Pocahontas*, ill. by authors. Doubleday, 1946. 6-10

AVERRILL, ESTHER. *Cartier Sails the St. Lawrence*, ill. by Teodor Rojankovsky. Harper, 1956. 10-14

— *King Philip, the Indian Chief*, ill. by Vera Belsky. Harper, 1950. This is the story of the chief of the Wampanoag Indians of New England, who led his tribe and others in fighting against the colonists in 1675. 12-14

BAILEY, BERNADINE. *Abe Lincoln's Other Mother: The Story of Sarah Bush Lincoln*, ill. by Howard Simon. Messner, 1941. F 10-12

BAKER, NINA BROWN. *Amigo Verpucci*, ill. by Paul Valentine. Knopf, 1956. 9-12

— *Pike of Pike's Peak*, ill. by Richard Powers. Harcourt, 1953. Well-paced, entertaining biography of a famous soldier and explorer. 11-14

— *Texas Yankee: The Story of Gail Borden*, ill. by Alan Meyer. Harcourt, 1955. The harsh experiences of his own pioneer days led Gail Borden to experiment with condensed foods and later with milk, which proved of tremendous value in Civil War days. 11-14

BELL, MARGARET E. *Kit Carson, Mountain Man*, ill. by Harry Daugherty. Morrow, 1952. A short, dramatic biography with large print and many illustrations. 8-11

BROWN, JOHN MASON. *Daniel Boone; the Opening of the Wilderness*, ill. by Lee Ames. Random, 1952 (Landmark Book). Fine characterization adds distinction to this biography of the Kentucky pioneer. 12-15

BROWN, SLATER. *Ethan Allen and the Green Mountain Boys*, ill. by William Moyers. Random, 1956 (Landmark Book). The character of the Vermont hero emerges as a courageous one; Ethan Allen is uncrushed by imprisonment or personal disappointments. 11-15

BULLA, CLYDE. *John Billington, Friend of Squanto*, ill. by Peter Burchard. Crowell, 1956. John got into fights on the Mayflower and on Plymouth's bleak shores, but it was John's worst trouble that helped the Pilgrims most of all. F 7-10

— *Squanto, Friend of the White Men*, ill. by Peter Burchard. Crowell, 1954. F 8-10

COBLENTZ, CATHERINE CATE. *Sequoyia* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

COMMAGER, HENRY STEELE. *America's Robert E. Lee*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Houghton, 1951 (America's Series). 11-15

- DALGLIESH, ALICE. *The Columbus Story*, ill. by Leo Politi. Scribner, 1955. 8 11
- DAUGHERTY, JAMES. *Abraham Lincoln*, ill. by author. Viking, 1943.
- *Daniel Boone*, ill. by author. Viking, 1939.
- *Poor Richard*, ill. by author. Viking, 1941.
- *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman: Pioneers of Oregon*, ill. by author. Viking, 1953. A heroic story of the life and tragic death of two brave doctor-missionaries to the Indians. 12-15
- *Of Courage Undaunted; Across the Continent with Lewis and Clark*, ill. by author. Viking, 1951. 11-15
- DAVIS, JULIA. *No Other White Men*, ill. by Caroline Gray Dutton, 1937. 12-14
- DE LEEUW, ADLE. *The Story of Amelia Earhart*, ill. by Harry Beckhoff Grosset, 1955 (Signature Book). 10-12
- EATON, JEANETTE. *Leader by Destiny*, ill. by Jack Manley Rose Harcourt, 1938
- *Lone Journey: The Life of Roger Williams*, ill. by Woodi Ishmael Harcourt, 1944. Story of the courageous Puritan who left the Massachusetts colony and helped establish Rhode Island. 12-16
- *Narcissa Whitman: Pioneer of Oregon*, ill. by Woodi Ishmael. Harcourt, 1941. This inspiring story of the great pioneer woman is based on early letters and memoirs. 12-16
- *That Lovely Man, Ben Franklin*, ill. by Henry C. Pitz Morrow, 1948. Franklin's many-sided career, from printer to ambassador to France and England, is well portrayed. 11-14
- *Washington, the Nation's First Hero*, ill. by Ralph Ray. Morrow, 1951. 9-12
- *Young Lafayette*, ill. by David Hendrickson. Houghton, 1932. 12-16
- FARNSWORTH, FRANCIS JOYCE. *Winged Moccasins: The Story of Sacajawea*, ill. by Lorence Bjorklund. Messner, 1954. 12-15
- FAST, HOWARD. *Haym Salomon: Son of Liberty*, ill. by E. M. Simon. Messner, 1941. 12-16
- FISHER, DOROTHY CANFIELD. *Paul Revere and the Minute Men*, ill. by Norman Price. Random, 1950 (Landmark Book). 10-13
- FORBES, ESTHER. *America's Paul Revere*, ill. by Lynd Ward Houghton, 1946. Vigorous prose and superb illustrations make this book a treasure for children to own. It is not easy reading but will do much to illumine the history of the Revolutionary period. 11-15
- FOSTER, GENEVIEVE. *Abraham Lincoln: An Initial Biography*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1950.
- *Andrew Jackson: An Initial Biography*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1951.
- *George Washington: An Initial Biography*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1949.
- *Theodore Roosevelt: An Initial Biography*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1954. 9-12
- GALT, TOM. *Peter Zenger: Fighter for Freedom*, ill. by Ralph Ray. Crowell, 1951. Biography of a famous pre-Revolutionary War printer, who faced trial and prison rather than yield the right of freedom of the press. 12-15
- GARST, DORIS SHANNON. *Chief Joseph of the Nez Percé*, ill. by Douglas Gorsline. Messner, 1953.
- *Crazy Horse, Great Warrior of the Sioux*, ill. by William Moyers. Houghton, 1950.
- Both these biographies give good perspective on why the Indians so bitterly opposed the white men. 12-15
- GOWDY, GEORGE. *Young Buffalo Bill*, ill. by Howard Simon. Lothrop, 1955. Emphasis is on the young boy forced to assume responsibility for the family at his father's death. A well-told story. P 11-14
- GRAY, ELIZABETH JANET. *Penn.*, ill. by George Gillett Whitney. Viking, 1938. 12-16
- HODGES, C. WALTER. *Columbus Sails* (see Bibliography, Chapter 16).
- HOLBROOK, STEWART. *America's Ethan Allen*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Houghton, 1949. Spirited illustrations in color add to the dramatic story of the "Green Mountain Boys" and their fighting leader. 11-15
- HUNT, MABEL LEIGH. *Better Known As Johnny Appleseed*, ill. by James Daugherty. Lippincott, 1950. The life of John Chapman, "American pioneer, missionary and apple lover," based on old legends and reminiscences gathered by the author. 12-16
- JAMES, BESSIE and MARQUIS. *Six Feet Six: The Heroic Story of Sam Houston*, ill. by Lowell Bakolm. Bobbs, 1951. 12-16
- JOHNSON, ENID. *Cochise: Great Apache Chief*, ill. by Lorence F. Bjorklund. Messner, 1953. A tragic story of a great leader's trust and disillusionment. 11-15
- JUDSON, CLARA INGRAM. *Abraham Lincoln, Friend of the People*, ill. by Robert Frankenberg and with photographs Wilcox & Follett, 1950.
- *Andrew Jackson, Frontier Statesman*, ill. by Lorence F. Bjorklund. Wilcox & Follett, 1954. 11-15
- *City Neighbor, The Story of Jane Addams*, ill. by Ralph Ray. Scribner, 1951. 10-13
- *George Washington, Leader of the People*, ill. by Robert Frankenberg. Wilcox & Follett, 1951.
- *Theodore Roosevelt, Fighting Patriot*, ill. by Lorence F. Bjorklund. Wilcox & Follett, 1953.
- *Thomas Jefferson, Champion of the People*, ill. by Robert Frankenberg. Wilcox & Follett, 1952. 11-15
- KANTOR, MACKINLAY. *Lee and Grant at Appomattox*, ill. by Donald McKay. Random, 1950 (Landmark Book). 10-14
- LATHAM, JEAN LEE. *Carry On, Mr. Bowditch*, ill. by John O'Hara Cosgrave II. Houghton, 1955. F 11-15
- *Trail Blazer of the West*, ill. by Victor Mays. Houghton, 1956. Absorbing story of the scientific U.S. Naval Lieutenant, Matthew Fontaine Maury, who studied winds and currents to reduce ships' sailing time. P 11-15
- LE SUEUR, MERIDEL. *Chamicleer of Wilderness Road. A Story of Davy Crockett*, ill. by Aldren Watson Knopf, 1951. Young readers not yet ready for the more difficult Rourke biography of Davy Crockett will find this one completely satisfying. Legends, tall tales, and facts are humorously woven together. 10 13
- LISITZKY, GENE. *Thomas Jefferson*, ill. by Harrie Wood. Viking, 1933.
- MARRIOTT, ALICE. *Sequoyah: Leader of the Cherokees*, ill. by Robert Riger. Random, 1956 (Land-

- mark Book). Story of the scholarly Indian who made a syllabary of the Cherokee language so his people could learn to read and write. 10-14
- MEADOWCROFT, ENID. *The Story of Crazy Horse*, ill. by William Reusswig. Grosset, 1954 (Signature Book). Biography of the brave Oglala chief who opposed Custer, and who died escaping imprisonment. 9-12
- MILLS, LOIS. *Three Together; the Story of the Wright Brothers and Their Sister*, ill. by William Moyers. Wilcox & Follett, 1955. A biography rich in human values and persistence in the face of many failures. 9-13
- NORTH, STERLING. *Abe Lincoln: Log Cabin to White House*, ill. by Lee Ames. Random, 1956 (Landmark Book). A stimulating well-rounded biography based on careful research. 11-15
- PACE, MILDRED. *Clara Barton*, ill. by Robert Ball. Scribner, 1941. 10-12
- PECKHAM, HOWARD. *Nathaniel Greene, Independent Boy*, ill. by Paul Laune Bobbs, 1956 (Childhood of Famous Americans Series). Story of the little lame Quaker boy who grew to be one of the great Revolutionary War heroes. F 8-11
- PETRY, ANN. *Harriet Tubman: Conductor on the Underground Railroad*. Crowell, 1955. 12-16
- ROGERS, FRANCES, and ALICE BEARD. *Paul Revere, Patriot on Horseback*, ill. by Frances Rogers. Lippincott, 1943. Offers a good background of the American Revolution. 11-14
- ROURKE, CONSTANCE. *Davy Crockett*, ill. by James MacDonald. Harcourt, 1934. 12-16
- SANDBURG, CARL. *Abe Lincoln Grows Up*, ill. by James Daugherty. Harcourt, 1928. 11-16
- SHEEAN, VINCENT. *Thomas Jefferson, Father of Democracy*, ill. by Warren Chappell. Random, 1953 (Landmark Book). An interesting picture of the famous statesman and president who helped establish a democratic government. 11-15
- SHIPPEN, KATHERINE. *Leif Eriksson; First Voyager to America*. Harper, 1951. Well-written, exciting biography of the explorer of Vinland. 11-13
- . *Mr. Bell Invents the Telephone*, ill. by Richard Floethe. Random, 1952 (Landmark Book). Alexander Graham Bell's achievement is doubly satisfying because of the disheartening failures that preceded his successful invention. 10-13
- SPIERRY, ARMSTRONG. *John Paul Jones: Fighting Sailor*, ill. by author. Random, 1953 (Landmark Book). 10-13
- . *Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, ill. by author. Random, 1950 (Landmark Book). 10-13
- STEFLE, WILLIAM O. *John Sevier, Pioneer Boy*, ill. by Sandra James. Bobbs, 1953 (Childhood of Famous Americans Series). F 8-10
- STEVENSON, AUGUSTA. *Abe Lincoln: Frontier Boy*, ill. by Clotilde Embree. Bobbs, 1932. 10-13
- . *Ben Franklin: Printer's Boy*, ill. by Paul Laune. Bobbs, 1941. F 8-10
- SYME, RONALD. *Balboa, Finder of the Pacific*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1956. 10-13
- . *Champlain of the St. Lawrence*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1952. 10-13
- . *Columbus, Finder of the New World*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1952. 10-13
- . *Henry Hudson*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1955. 10-13
- . *John Smith of Virginia*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1954. 10-13
- . *La Salle of the Mississippi*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1953. 10-13
- . *Magellan, First Around the World*, ill. by William Stobbs Morrow, 1953. 10-12
- VANCE, MARGUERITE. *The Jacksons of Tennessee*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1953. 10-13
- . *The Lees of Arlington: The Story of Mary and Robert E. Lee*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1949. 10-13
- . *Martha, Daughter of Virginia; the Story of Martha Washington*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1947. 10-13
- . *Patty Jefferson of Monticello*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1948. 11-14
- VINTON, IRIS. *The Story of John Paul Jones*, ill. by Edward A. Wilson. Grosset, 1953 (Signature Book). 10-13
- WILSON, HAZEL. *The Story of Lafayette*, ill. by Edy Legrand. Grosset, 1952 (Signature Book). 10-13
- . *The Story of Mad Anthony Wayne*, ill. by Lawrence Beall Smith. Grosset, 1953 (Signature Book). 10-13
- WYATT, EDGAR. *Cochise: Apache Warrior and Statesman*, ill. by Allan Houser. Whitlessey House (McGraw), 1953. 10-14
- . *Geronimo, the Last Apache War Chief*, ill. by Allan Houser. Whitlessey House (McGraw), 1952. 10-14
- Stories of two great Indian heroes of Arizona pioneering days. 11-14
- YATES, ELIZABETH. *Amos Fortune, Free Man*, ill. by Nora S. Unwin. Aladdin, 1950. 10-14
- YOUNG, STANLEY. *Young Hickory*, ill. by Robert Fawcett. Rinehart, 1940, o p 10-14

## Other historical figures

See also Collections of biographical sketches.

BAKER, NINA BROWN. *He Wouldn't Be King: The Story of Simón Bolívar*, ill. by Camillo Egas. Vanguard, 1941. 10-14

—. *Robert Bruce: King of Scots Vanguard*, 1948. 10-14

—. *Sir Walter Raleigh*. Harcourt, 1950. 10-14

This author can be depended upon to write an exciting biography, somewhat fictionalized but authentic in the main and exceedingly readable. 12-14

BLACKSTOCK, JOSEPHINE. *Songs for Sixpence. A Story About John Newbery*, ill. by Maurice Bower. Wilcox & Follett, 1955. The story of John Newbery, one of the earliest publishers of books for children. The Newbery Medal, awarded annually for the most distinguished book, is named in his honor. F 9-12

BULLA, CLYDE. *Song of St. Francis*, ill. by Valenti Angelo Crowell, 1952. The appealing story of St. Francis of Assisi presented in simple fashion for younger readers. 8-10

EATON, JEANETTE. *David Livingstone, Foe of Darkness*, ill. by Ralph Ray. Morrow, 1947. As a missionary and explorer, David Livingstone played an important part in the history of Africa. 10-14

—. *Gandhi: Fighter Without a Sword*, ill. by 10-14

- Ralph Ray. *Morrow*, 1950. This is a fine biography of the Hindu nationalist who worked for the political independence of his people. 12-15
- , *Jeanne d'Arc, the Warrior Saint*, ill. by Harve Stein. Harper, 1931, o.p. 10-12
- GOTTSCHEK, FRANK. *The Youngest General: a Story of Lafayette*, ill. by Raffaello Busoni. Knopf, 1919. The author had access to unusual original sources in writing this well-documented life of Lafayette. 10-14
- HALL, ANNA GERTRUDE. *Nansen*, ill. by Boris Artzybasheff. Viking, 1940. Stirring biography of the famous Arctic explorer and Nobel Peace Prize winner. 12-16
- JUDSON, CLARA INGRAM. *Soldier Doctor; the Story of William Gorgas*, ill. by Robert Doremus Scribner, 1942. In his brave fight against yellow fever, William Gorgas, army surgeon, made possible the building of the Panama Canal. 11-14
- KIELTY, BERNARDINE. *Marie Antoinette*, ill. by Douglas Gorsline. Random, 1955 (World Landmark Book). A well-written biography which gives an excellent background of the causes of the French Revolution. 11-14
- KING, MARIAN. *Young Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots*. Lippincott, 1954. A moving biography of the young queen which places emphasis on her childhood and the years in France. 11-14
- LEIGHTON, MARGARET. *The Story of Florence Nightingale*, ill. by Corinne Dillon. Grosset, 1952 (Signature Book). 9-12
- MEIGS, ELIZABETH B. *Candle in the Sky*, ill. by Dorothy Bayle Morse. Dutton, 1953. 11-14
- NOLAN, JEANNETTE COVERT. *Florence Nightingale*, ill. by George Avison. Messner, 1946. This warm, readable biography of Florence Nightingale stresses her work rather than her personal life. 11-14
- PAINE, ALBERT BIGELOW. *Girl in White Armor, the True Story of Joan of Arc*. Macmillan, 1927. This is a fine authentic biography based on careful research. Abridged from the author's adult biography. 12-15
- ROOS, ANN. *Man of Molokai: the Life of Father Damien*, ill. by Raymond Lufkin. Lippincott, 1943. Splendid biography of a great modern saint who spent his life in the service of lepers. 11-14
- SYME, RONALD. *Cortés of Mexico*, ill. by William Stobbs. Morrow, 1951. An introductory story of Cortés' exploration and conquest. 10-14
- VANCE, MARGUERITE. *Elizabeth Tudor, Sovereign Lady*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1954.
- , *Lady Jane Grey, Reluctant Queen*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1952.
- , *Marie Antoinette; Daughter of an Empress*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1950. These three stories of young queens are sympathetically and dramatically told, and are a stimulus to further historical reading. 12-15
- , *The Empress Josephine from Martinique to Malmaison*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1956. An excellent selection of detail makes this a vivid biography of the selfish, personable woman who in the end defeated herself. 13-16
- WIBBERLEY, LEONARD. *The Life of Winston Churchill*, ill. Farrar, Straus, 1956. One of England's greatest

notables from his mischievous childhood to retirement as Prime Minister. Told with humor and dignity. 12-16

WILSON, HAZEL. *The Story of Lafayette*, ill. by Ely Legrand Grosset, 1952 (Signature Book). 10-12

## Artists

See also Collections of biographical sketches.

- CRIVEN, THOMAS. *The Rainbow Book of Art* (see Bibliography, Chapter 19).
- DEUCHER, SYBIL. *Miller Tilled the Soil*, ill. by Dorothy Bayley. Dutton, 1939, o.p. Miller is a difficult hero to reduce to child size, but this is a popular book and introduces the most frequently used pictures of the artist. 11-12
- FISHER, CLYDE. *The Life of Audubon*, ill. by John James Audubon. Harper, 1919. Written by a former staff member of the American Museum of Natural History, this biography is enhanced with reproductions of Audubon's own paintings in black and white and full color. 10-14
- HENRY, MARGUERITE, and WESLEY DENNIS. *Benjamin West and His Cat, Grimaldin*, ill. by Wesley Dennis. Bobbs, 1917. 9-12
- LANE, MARGARET. *The Tale of Beatrix Potter: A Biography*, ill. by Beatrix Potter. Warne, 1946. Delightful story of the Victorian artist whose *Peter Rabbit* tales have delighted younger children. 13-16
- NEWCOMB, COVELLE. *The Secret Door; the Story of Kate Greenaway*, ill. by Addison Burbank. Dodd, 1946. Entertaining fictional biography about one of the popular early illustrators for children. 12-15
- RIPLEY, ELIZABETH. *Goya*, ill. by Goya. Oxford, 1956.
- , *Leonardo Da Vinci*, ill. by Leonardo Oxford, 1952.
- , *Michelangelo*, ill. by Michelangelo. Oxford, 1953.
- , *Rembrandt*, ill. by Rembrandt. Oxford, 1955.
- , *Vincent Van Gogh*, ill. by Van Gogh. Oxford, 1954. 10-15
- WELLS, MAIE and DOROTHY FOX. *Boy of the Woods; The Story of John James Audubon*, ill. by Elinore Blaisdell. Dutton, 1912, o.p. A well-written account of the artist naturalist Audubon for younger readers. 9-12

## Musicians

See also Collections of biographical sketches.

- ARNOLD, ELLIOTT. *Finlandia: the Story of Sibelius*, ill. by Lolita Granahan. Holt, 1950 (Holt Musical Biography Series). Biography of the great Finnish composer who, through his music, interpreted the spirit of his people. 12-15
- BENÉT, LAURA. *Enchanting Jenny Lind*, ill. by George G. Whitney. Dodd, 1939. 12-14
- DEUCHER, SYBIL. *Edvard Grieg, Boy of the Northland*, ill. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1946.
- EWEN, DAVID. *The Story of George Gershwin*, ill. by Graham Bernbach. Holt, 1943 (Holt Musical Biography Series). Memories of an American composer of popular music by a personal friend. 12-16
- , *Tales from the Vienna Woods: The Story of*



- Johann Strauss*, ill. by Edgard Gitlin. Holt, 1944. The composer of some of the best-loved dance music is presented against a background of romantic nineteenth-century Vienna. 12-14
- GOSS, MADELEINE. *Beethoven: Master Musician*, ill. by Carl Schultheiss. Holt, 1946 (Holt Musical Biography Series). 12-14
- . *Deep Flowing Brook: The Story of Johann Sebastian Bach*, ill. by Elnore Blaisdell. Holt, 1938. Mrs. Goss writes unusually perceptive and comprehensive studies of musicians and their works. Her books are highly recommended. 12-16
- KELLOGG, CHARLOTTE. *Padreuski*. Viking, 1936. Written with unusual distinction and perception, this life story of the great Polish musician and statesman offers an unforgettable picture of his life and times. 13-14
- KOMROFF, MANUEL. *Mozart*, ill. by Warren Chapell and with photographs. Knopf, 1956. Written to commemorate the two-hundredth anniversary of Mozart's birth, this is an outstanding biography. 11-15
- LINGG, ANN M. *John Philip Sousa*. Holt, 1954. Entertaining biography of the composer and conductor who became known as America's "March King." 12-15
- PURDY, CLAIRE. *Antonín Dvořák: Composer from Bohemia*. Messner, 1950. A warm and sympathetic story of a great musician. 13-14
- . *He Heard America Sing: The Story of Stephen Foster*, ill. by Dorothea Cooke. Messner, 1940. 12-14
- WHEELER, OPAL. *Ludwig Beethoven, and the Chiming Tower Bells*, ill. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1942. 12-14
- WHEELER, OPAL, and SYBIL DEUCHER. *Franz Schubert and His Merry Friends*, ill. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1939. 12-14
- . *Joseph Haydn: the Merry Little Peasant*, ill. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1936. 12-14
- . *Mozart, the Wonder Boy*, ill. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1934. 12-14
- . *Sebastian Bach: the Boy from Thuringia*, ill. by Mary Greenwalt. Dutton, 1937. 9-12

## Writers

- See also Collections of biographical sketches.
- BECKER, MAY L. *Presenting Miss Jane Austen*, ill. by Edward Price. Dodd, 1952. This picture of the life and times of Jane Austen, written by an Austen enthusiast, is a good introduction to the novels. 14-16
- BENÉT, LAURA. *The Boy Shelley*, ill. by James MacDonald. Dodd, 1937. Well-written, a tragic record of a school's changing the whole temper of a boy. 13-16
- . *Young Edgar Allan Poe*, ill. by George G. Whitney. Dodd, 1941. Sympathetic portrayal of a gifted ill-fated writer. 13-16
- COLLIN, HEDVIG. *Young Hans Christian Andersen*, ill. by author. Viking, 1955. Sensitive told story of the Danish writer from his childhood years to his first literary recognition. 11-14
- DEUTSCH, BABETTE. *Walt Whitman: Builder for*

- America*, ill. by Raffaello Bassani. Messner, 1941. A sensitive study of the man, illustrated with copious selections from his poems. 14-16
- GRAY, ELIZABETH JANET. *Young Walter Scott*, ill. by Kate Seredy. Viking, 1935. 12-14
- HARLOW, ALVIN E. *Joel Chandler Harris: Plantation Story Teller*, ill. by W. C. Nims. Messner, 1941. A fine account of the lovable creator of Uncle Remus. 12-15
- JACKSON, PHYLLIS WYNN. *Victorian Cinderella*, ill. by Elliott Means. Holiday, 1947. Good picture of the life and times of Harriet Beecher Stowe, who wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. F 12-15
- JARDEN, MARY LOUISE. *The Young Bronies: Charlotte and Emily, Branwell and Anne*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Viking, 1938. An exceedingly well-written biography for girls who are interested in the Bronies. 14-16
- MASON, MIRIAM. *Yours with Love, Kate*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Houghton, 1952. One of the first kindergarten teachers in America, Kate Douglas Wiggin also became a well-loved author of children's books. 10-14
- MEIGS, CORNELIA. *Intriguing Louise*, ill. with photographs. Little, 1933. 12-16
- PAINE, ALBERT BIGELOW. *Boys' Life of Mark Twain; the Story of a Man Who Made the World Laugh and Love Him*. Harper, 1916. This book captures the spirit and individuality of the great humorist. 14-16
- PROUDFIT, ISABEL. *River Boy; the Story of Mark Twain*, ill. by W. C. Nims. Messner, 1940. An excellent life of the author of *Tom Sawyer* for older boys and girls. 12-16
- . *The Treasure Hunter, the Story of Robert Louis Stevenson*, ill. by Hardie Gramady. Messner, 1939. A full-length biography of a favorite children's author. 10-14
- WAGONER, JEAN BROWN. *Louisa Alcott: Girl of Old Boston*, ill. by Sandra James. Bobbs, 1943 (Childhood of Famous Americans Series). F 9-11
- WATTE, HELEN. *How Do I Love Thee? The Story of Elizabeth Barrett Browning*. Macrae Smith Co., 1953. An absorbing story of the Victorian poetess, climaxed by her romance with Robert Browning. 12-16

## Miscellaneous

- BONTEMPS, ARNA. *The Story of George Washington Carver*, ill. by Harper Johnson. Grosset, 1954 (Signature Book). 11-15
- BURT, OLIVE. *Luether Burbank. Boy Wizard*, ill. by Cloude Embree Funk. Bobbs, 1948 (Childhood of famous Americans Series). F 9-10
- BYRD, RICHARD E. *Alone*. Putnam, 1938. 14-16
- DALGLISH, ALICE. *Ride on the Wind*, ill. by Georges Schreiber. Scribner, 1956. Miss DalGLISH has skillfully retold the boyhood and famous flight of Charles Lindbergh for children too young to read *The Spirit of St. Louis*. 6-10
- FOSDICK, HARRY EMERSON. *Martin Luther*, ill. by Steele Savage. Random, 1936 (World Landmark Book). Written by one of the best known Protestant ministers, this is a stirring biography of the great reformer. 12-16

GRAHAM, SHIRLEY. *Booker T. Washington; Educator of Hand, Head, and Heart*, ill. by Donald W. Lambo. Messner, 1955.

— *The Story of Phyllis Wheatley*, ill. by Robert Burns Messner, 1949.

GRAHAM, SHIRLEY, and GEORGE LIPSCOMB, Dr. *George Washington Carver: Scientist*, ill. by Elton C. Fax. Messner, 1944.

A trio of biographies about famous Negroes who made contributions in the fields of literature, education, and science. 11-15

HOLT, RACKHAM [pseud for Margaret V. Holt]. *George Washington Carver*. Doubleday, 1943. 14—

JOHNSON, OSA. *I Married Adventure*. Lippincott, 1940. 12—

LAVINE, SIGMUND *Steinmetz Maker of Lightning*, ill. with photographs. Dodd, 1955. This biography of the crippled German immigrant is a happy combination of good characterization and scientific information. 13—

LAWSON, ROBERT. *They Were Strong and Good*, ill. by author. Viking, 1940. F 8-12

MCNEER, MAY. *John Wesley*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1951.

— *Martin Luther*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953.

Rousing biographies of two great religious leaders. Methodist John Wesley is easier for children to understand. The fighting spirit of Martin Luther makes his complex life both difficult and thrilling. Superb illustrations add distinction to these books. 12-14

MALVERN, GLADYS *Dancing Star: the Story of Anna Pavlova*, ill. by Susanne Suba. Messner, 1942. 13—

MANTON, JO *The Story of Albert Schweitzer*, ill. by Astrid Walford. Abelard Schuman, 1955. Beautifully written biography of the famous musician and missionary to Africa. 12-16

POWER-WATERS, ALMA *The Story of Young Edwin Booth*, ill. with photographs. Dutton, 1955. Ill-fated young Edwin Booth finally rose above the blows of fate that were crowned with his brother's assassination of Lincoln. Written with distinction and penetration. 12-16

STEFFENS, LINCOLN. *Boy on Horseback*, ill. by Sanford Tousey. Harcourt, 1935. The boyhood of Lincoln Steffens taken from his adult autobiography. 12-16

WALDECK, THEODORE J. *On Safaris* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17).

WASHINGTON, BOOKER T. *Up from Slavery*. Houghton, 1928. 12—

WONG, JADE SNOW. *Fifth Chinese Daughter*, ill. by Kathryn Uhl. Harper, 1950. Fine writing distinguishes this autobiography of a young girl raised in an American Chinatown with the usual conflict between old and new ways. This book gives a delightful picture of Chinese-American family life. 12—

WOOD, LAURA *Raymond L. Ditmars, His Exciting Career with Reptiles, Animals and Insects*, ill. with photographs. Messner, 1944. The early struggles of a young scientist to obtain and study the snakes that became his life work will interest young animal lovers. 10-14

## Chapter 19 Of many things

### Science books

#### Plants

BUFF, MARY and CONRAD. *Big Tree*, ill. by Conrad Buff. Viking, 1946. A unique book that tells of the growth of a redwood tree which survives centuries of world events and dangers from animal and human enemies. 9-14

CORMACK, MARIBELLE. *The First Book of Trees*, ill. by Helene Carter. F. Watts, 1951. Describes the growth and reproduction of trees and provides aids for their identification. 8-12

KIRKUS, VIRGINIA. *The First Book of Gardening*, ill. by Helene Carter. F. Watts, 1956. A fine, detailed book for beginning gardeners on planning, planting, and caring for the garden. 8-12

LUCAS, JANNETTE. *First the Flower, Then the Fruit*, ill. by Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1943, o.p.

— *Fruits of the Earth*, ill. by Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1942, o.p.

Beautiful color-illustrated books which describe the origin and migration of many plant foods and flowers.

— *Indian Harvest; Wild Food Plants of America*, ill. by Helene Carter. Lippincott, 1945. How animals, Indians, and pioneers discovered edible foods in early America. 10-15

POBENDORF, ILLA. *The True Book of Trees*, ill. by Richard Gates. Childrens Press, 1954.

— *The True Book of Weeds and Flowers*, ill. by Mary Gehr. Childrens Press, 1955

Large-print, colorfully illustrated introductions to plant life for younger readers. 5-8

SELSAM, MILLICENT. *Play with Leaves and Flowers*, ill. by Fred F. Scherer. Morrow, 1952.

— *Play with Vines*, ill. by Fred F. Scherer. Morrow, 1951.

These books combine simple experiments, good information, and clear pictures. 9-12

STEFFERUD, ALFRED *The Wonders of Seeds*, ill. by Shirley Briggs. Harcourt, 1956. Absorbing information on where seeds come from, how they disperse and grow, and how they serve mankind. 11—

WEBBER, IRMA ELEANOR. *But That Grow Big; Where Plants Come From*, ill. by author. W. R. Scott, 1949.

— *Travelers All; The Story of How Plants Go Places*, ill. by author. W. R. Scott, 1944.

— *Up Above and Down Below*, ill. by author. W. R. Scott, 1943.

Excellent introduction to seeds, plants, and plant growth, with simple, bright drawings. 5-8

ZIM, HERBERT. *What's Inside of Plants?* ill. by Herschel Wartik. Morrow, 1952. Good drawings and introductory information on the parts of plants and how plants grow. 7-10

ZIM, HERBERT, and ALEXANDER C. MARTIN. *Flowers; A Guide to Familiar American Wild Flowers*, ill. by Rudolf Freund. Simon & Schuster, 1950.

— *Trees; A Guide to Familiar American Trees*, ill. by Dorothea and Sy Barlowe. Simon & Schuster, 1952.

Attractive pocket-size guides with small clear illustrations in color and brief text. 10—

## Animals

ADRIAN, MARY [pseud. for Mary E Venn]. *Fiddler Crab*, ill. by Jean Martinez. Holiday, 1953.

—, *Garden Spider*, ill. by Ralph Ray. Holiday, 1951.

—, *Gray Squirrel*, ill. by Walter Ferguson. Holiday, 1955.

—, *Honeybee*, ill. by Barbara Latham. Holiday, 1952.

Attractive format, accuracy, and simple presentation characterize these nature-cycle tales 7-10

ANDREWS, ROY CHAPMAN. *All about Dinosaurs*, ill. by Thomas Voter. Random, 1953. This story of the age of reptiles offers an absorbing background of fossil research as well as animal descriptions.

—, *All about Whales*, ill. by Thomas Voter. Random, 1954. Excellent information about whales, their evolution, characteristics, and habitats 10-12

BIANCO, MARGERY. *All about Pets*, ill. by Grace Gilson. Macmillan, 1929. 7-14

BRIDGES, WILLIAM. *Zoo Babies*, ill. with photographs. Morrow, 1953. Amusing happenings among young zoo animals, together with interesting information 8-10

—, *Zoo Expeditions*, ill. with photographs. Morrow, 1954. Highly readable account of journeys to far distances to secure animals for the Bronx Zoo. 12-16

BRIDGES, WILLIAM, and MARY BAKER. *Wild Animals of the World*. Garden City Bks, 1953. Outstanding animal illustrations, alternating in two-tone and rich color, make this a beautiful animal picture-book as well as a source of brief information 10—

BRONSON, WILFRID. *Coyotes*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1946. 7-10

—, *Horns and Antlers*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1942. Deer and antelope of North America, their physical structure and pattern of life 10-14

—, *Starlings*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1948

—, *Turtles*, ill. by author. Harcourt, 1945.

Large print, clear black-and-white drawings, and a dash of humor in text and pictures add to the appeal of these accurate, simple nature books. 7-10

BUFF, MARY and CONRAD. *Daib and Dart* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17).

—, *Hurry, Skurry and Flurry* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17)

CHRYSTIE, FRANCES. *Pets; a Complete Handbook on the Care, Understanding, and Appreciation of All Kinds of Animal Pets*, ill. by Gillett G. Griffin. Little, 1953. 10-15

DITMARS, RAYMOND. *Reptiles of North America*, ill. with photographs. Doubleday, 1936. An excellent source book by an authority. All ages

EARLE, OLIVE. *Birds and Their Nests*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1952. Nest-building habits of over forty familiar and less known birds. 8-12

—, *Crickets*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1956. Life cycle of many types of crickets, attractively illustrated. 8-11

—, *Paws, Hoofs, and Flippers*, ill. by author.

Morrow, 1954. Interestingly organized material on the appendages of mammals. 10-13

—, *Robins in the Garden*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1953. An absorbing story of the raising of a robin family based on first-hand observation. 6-8

—, *Thunder Wings, the Story of a Ruffed Grouse*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1951. 6-8

EBERLE, ILMENGARDE. *Hop, Skip, and Fly*, ill. by Else Bostelmann. Holiday, 1951. 6-10

GOUDY, ALICE. *Here Come the Bears!* ill. by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner, 1954.

—, *Here Come the Deer!* ill. by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner, 1955.

—, *Here Come the Elephants!* ill. by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner, 1955.

—, *Here Come the Lions!* ill. by Garry MacKenzie. Scribner, 1956.

Different breeds of animals are described in simple accounts for the youngest readers. 7-9

GREENBERG, SYLVIA S., and EDITH L. RASKIN. *Home-Made Zoo*, ill. by Joseph Raskin and William Lubin. McKay, 1952. 10-13

HEGNER, ROBERT and JANE. *Parade of the Animal Kingdom*, ill. with photographs. Macmillan, 1935. A copiously illustrated comprehensive introduction to animal life from its most elementary forms through the primates. 12—

HESS, LILLO, and DOROTHY C. HOGNER. *Odd Pets*. Crowell, 1951. 7-10

HOGNER, DOROTHY C. *Earthworms*, ill. by Nils Hogner. Crowell, 1953. The life of the earthworm and its value in agriculture are simply told. 7-10

—, *The Horse Family*, ill. by Nils Hogner. Oxford, 1953. From prehistoric horses to present-day breeds. 9-12

HOGNER, DOROTHY C. and NILS. *The Animal Book, American Mammals North of Mexico*. Oxford, 1942. Almost one hundred and seventy animals arranged by species. Fine large black-and-white drawings. 10—

HOKER, JOHN. *The First Book of Snakes*, ill. by Paul Wenck F. Watts, 1952. 9-12

HUNTINGTON, HARRIET. *Let's Go Outdoors*, ill. by Preston Duncan. Doubleday, 1939

—, *Let's Go to the Brook*, ill. with photographs. Doubleday, 1952.

—, *Let's Go to the Desert*, ill. with photographs. Doubleday, 1949.

—, *Let's Go to the Seashore*, ill. with photographs. Doubleday, 1941.

Science for the youngest introduces small creatures to be found near home or in more special environments. 5-8

KIERAN, JOHN. *Introduction to Birds*, ill. by Don Eckelberry. Garden City Bks, 1950 9-13

LEMMON, ROBERT S. *All about Moths and Butterflies*, ill. by Fritz Kredel. Random, 1956. Here is found the fascinating story of the monarch butterfly's migrations and other curious facts. 6-14

McCLUNG, ROBERT M. *Bufo, the Story of a Toad*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1954.

—, *Green Darner, the Story of a Dragonfly*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1956.

—, *Volcan: the Story of a Bald Eagle*, ill. by Lloyd Sandford. Morrow, 1955.

- Three well-written nature books for younger readers by an author who has written widely on insects, birds, and animals. 7-9
- MCCRACKEN, HAROLD. *The Biggest Bear on Earth*, ill. by Paul Bransom Lippincott, 1943. An outstanding story of an Alaskan brown bear of the Aleutians. 11-14
- MATSCHAR, CECILE HULSE. *American Butterflies and Moths*, ill. by Rudolf Freund. Random, 1942, o.p. 8-12
- MOE, VIRGINIA. *Animal Inn*, ill. by Milo Winter. Houghton, 1946. Stories of small creatures at a roadside museum, sympathetically written and rich in nature lore. 11-14
- PELS, GERTRUDE. *The Care of Water Pets*, ill. by Ava Morgan. Crowell, 1955. A most useful and attractive book on starting an aquarium and caring for aquarium pets. 8-12
- PHILLIPS, MARY GEISLER. *The Makers of Honey*, ill. by Elizabeth Burckmyer. Crowell, 1956. In addition to excellent scientific information on bees, hives, and beekeeping, this book introduces the history of bees from earliest traceable times. An interesting study. 11-
- POPE, CLIFFORD. *Snakes Alive*, ill. with photographs. Viking, 1937. An amusing and reliable source. 12-16
- RIPPER, CHARLES L. *Bats*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1954.
- . *Hawks*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1956.
- Direct and highly interesting presentations of facts together with very fine drawings. 8-12
- SCHHEEL, WILLIAM. *First Mammals*, ill. by author. World Pub, 1955. The Director of the Cleveland Museum of Natural History traces mammal development in the past sixty million years, exclusive of man and apes. 10-
- . *Prehistoric Animals*, ill. by author. World Pub, 1954. In similar attractive format, this book describes the chief animals of earth's first five hundred million years of life. Outstanding illustrations and charts. 10-
- SCHNEIDER, STEVEN. *The First Book of Fishing*, ill. by Edwin Herron. F. Watts, 1952. 9-12
- SEARS, PAUL MCCUTCHEON. *Barn Swallow*, ill. by Walter Ferguson Holiday, 1955.
- . *Firefly*, ill. by Glen Rounds Holiday, 1956.
- . *Tree Frog*, ill. by Barbara Latham. Holiday, 1954
- Life-cycle stories simply and accurately told and illustrated in color. 7-9
- SNEDIGAR, ROBERT. *Our Small Native Animals*, ill. with photographs. Random, 1939, o.p. 8-16
- TEALE, EDWIN WAY. *The Junior Book of Insects*, ill. by author. Dutton, 1953. A well-known naturalist gives excellent information on common insects and on making insect collections. 11-15
- TIBBETTS, ALBERT B. *The First Book of Bees*, ill. by Helene Carter. F. Watts, 1952. 9-12
- WEBB, ADDISON. *Birds in Their Homes*, ill. by Sabra M. Kimball. Garden City Bks, 1947.
- . *Song of the Seasons*, ill. by Charles L. Ripper. Morrow, 1950. Arrangement of material by seasons makes this a useful and beautiful book on familiar animals. 8-11
- WILLIAMSON, MARGARET. *The First Book of Birds*, ill. by author. F. Watts, 1951. 9-12
- ZIM, HERBERT. *Elephants*, ill. by Joy Buba. Morrow, 1946.
- . *Frogs and Toads*, ill. by Joy Buba. Morrow, 1950.
- . *Goldfish*, ill. by Joy Buba. Morrow, 1947.
- . *Monkeys*, ill. by Gardell Christensen. Morrow, 1955.
- . *Parrakeets*, ill. by Larry Kettelkamp. Morrow, 1953.
- . *Rabbits*, ill. by Joy Buba. Morrow, 1948.
- . *Snakes*, ill. by James G. Irving. Morrow, 1949.
- With around forty science books to his credit, Mr. Zim has written an outstanding group of introductory stories on a variety of animals. 7-10
- . *Mice, Men, and Elephants*, ill. by James MacDonald. Harcourt, 1942. 12-16
- ZIM, HERBERT S., and HOBART M. SMITH. *Reptiles and Amphibians; a Guide to Familiar American Species*, ill. by James Gordon Irving. Simon & Schuster, 1953. 11-16
- ### Weather, stars, and such
- ADLER, IRVING. *Fire in Your Life*, ill. by Ruth Adler. Day, 1955.
- . *Tools in Your Life*, ill. by Ruth Adler. Day, 1956.
- Two books which trace the importance of fire and tools from primitive times to today. 11-15
- BAKER, ROBERT H. *When the Stars Come Out*, rev. ed. Viking, 1954. 10-16
- BAUMANN, HANS. *The Caves of the Great Hunters*, tr. by Isabel and Florence McHugh. Pantheon Bks., 1954. Authentic stories of the discovery of paintings made by men of the Ice Age in the Lascaux and Altamira Caves. Many fine pictorial reproductions make the book a contribution to art as well as to science. 11-16
- BELL, THELMA HARRINGTON. *Snow*, ill. by Corydon Bell. Viking, 1954. All about snow and its varied formations, its beneficial actions, and its dangers. Beautiful illustrations include many snow patterns. 8-14
- BLOUGH, GLENN, and MARJORIE CAMPBELL. *When You Go to the Zoo*. McGraw, 1955. This organizational approach to the zoo offers excellent background on the securing and feeding of animals and other problems of zoo maintenance. Useful for planning a zoo trip or for children's own reading. 10-14
- CASSELL, SYLVIA. *Nature Games and Activities*, ill. by Peter Burchard. Harper, 1956. Group leaders as well as children will welcome this book on outdoor crafts, making collections, and games. 10-
- COMSTOCK, ANNA BOTSFORD. *Handbook of Nature Study*, 24th ed. Cornell Univ. Press, 1939. All ages
- CORMACK, MARBELLE. *The First Book of Stones*, ill. by M. K. Scott. F. Watts, 1950. One of the most popular books on identifying and collecting for younger readers. 9-12
- FENTON, CARROLL LANE and MILDRED. *Rocks and Their Stories*, ill. with photographs. Doubleday, 1951.

- Careful descriptive information on various rocks and minerals. 11-14
- , *Worlds in the Sky*, ill. by authors. Day, 1950. An excellent, simply presented book on the earth and other heavenly bodies. 9-12
- FREEMAN, IRA. *All about the Wonders of Chemistry*, ill. by George Wilde. Random, 1954. A useful introduction offering brief historical background, basic principles, and important modern developments. 11-14
- FREEMAN, MAE and IRA. *Fun with Astronomy*. Random, 1953. Simple experiments add value to this stimulating title. 9-12
- HOGBEN, LANCELOT. *The Wonderful World of Mathematics*, ill. by André and Marjorie Saynor. Garden City Bks., 1955. A thought-provoking book on how mathematics has advanced human progress through the ages. Handsomely color-illustrated. 12—
- LEWELLEN, JOHN. *You and Atomic Energy and Its Wonderful Uses*, ill. by Lois Fisher. Childrens Press, 1949. A constructive account of what atomic energy is and how it can be used for mankind's good. 9-14
- PARKER, BERTHA MORRIS. *The Golden Book of Science*, ill. by Harry McNaught. Simon & Schuster, 1956.
- , *The Golden Treasury of Natural History*. Simon & Schuster, 1952.
- , *Science Experiences, Elementary School*, ill. by Lucy Ozone and Ora Walker. Row, 1932. Simple experiments chiefly related to the physical sciences. Includes instructions for making apparatus or toys to embody scientific principles. 8-12
- PERRY, JOHN. *Our Wonderful Eyes*, ill. by Jeanne Bendick. Whitteley House (McGraw), 1955. Excellent material on the anatomy of the eye and its function and care. 11-15
- POOLE, LYNN. *Your Trip into Space*, ill. by Clifford Geary. McGraw, 1953. A serious scientific approach to space travel. 11-14
- RAVIELLI, ANTHONY. *Wonders of the Human Body*, ill. by author. Viking, 1954. A distinguished contribution to the study of anatomy for younger readers, illustrated with fine black and white drawings. 8-12
- REED, WILLIAM MAXWELL. *The Earth for Sam, the Story of Mountains, Rivers, Dinosaurs and Men*, ill. by Karl Moseley. Harcourt, 1930.
- , *The Stars for Sam*, ill. by Karl Moseley. Harcourt, 1931.
- REED, WILLIAM MAXWELL, and WILFRID S. BRONSON. *The Sea for Sam*, ill. by Wilfrid S. Bronson. Harcourt, 1935.
- Three well-written titles which have maintained their usefulness and popularity for many years. 10-14
- REY, H. A. *Find the Constellations*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1954. 10—
- SCHNEIDER, HERMAN. *Everyday Weather and How It Works*, ill. by Jeanne Bendick. McGraw, 1951. What causes different kinds of weather, reinforced with simple experiments. Well illustrated. 9-13
- SCHNEIDER, HERMAN and NINA. *Rocks, Rivers, and the Changing Earth*, ill. by Edwin Herron. W. R. Scott, 1952. An introduction to geology with simple experiments that clarify changes in earth formations. 10-13
- SCHNEIDER, LEO. *You and Your Senses*, ill. by Gustav Schrotter. Harcourt, 1956. An excellent story of the five senses, with challenging experiments to illustrate their workings. 10-14
- SHIPPEN, KATHERINE. *The Bright Design*, ill. by Charles M. Daugherty. Viking, 1949. The story of various forms of energy and of the scientists who furthered man's use of them. 12-16
- , *Men, Microscopes, and Living Things*, ill. by Anthony Ravielli. Viking, 1955. 13—
- TRESSELT, ALVIN. *Sun Up* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15, for this and other books about weather and the seasons).
- Walt Disney's The Living Desert*, by Jane Werner and Staff of the Walt Disney Studio, ill. by Campbell Grant. Simon & Schuster, 1954.
- Walt Disney's Vanishing Prairie*, by Jane Werner and the Staff of the Walt Disney Studio, ill. by Campbell Grant. Simon & Schuster, 1955.
- Each book introduces the natural history of the area with pictures of unique beauty and an entertaining text. 9—
- WHITE, ANNE TERRY. *Prehistoric America*, ill. by Aldren Watson. Random, 1951 (Landmark Book). An authentic and popular account of the geological development of this country. 10-13
- WYLER, ROSE, and GERALD AMES. *The Golden Book of Astronomy*, ill. by John Polgreen. Simon & Schuster, 1955. 9-14
- , *The Story of the Ice Age*, ill. by Thomas Voter. Harper, 1956. Describes research into the causes of the Ice Age and its effect on living things. 10-14
- ZIM, HERBERT S. *Lightning and Thunder*, ill. by James G. Irving. Morrow, 1952.
- , *The Sun*, ill. by Larry Kettelkamp. Morrow, 1953.
- , *What's inside of Engines?* ill. by Raymond Perlman. Morrow, 1953.
- Physical phenomena simply presented for younger readers. 8-11
- ZOLOTOV, CHARLOTTE. *The Storm Book*, ill. by Margaret Bisy Graham. Harper, 1952. Over land and sea sweeps the summer storm, and in the clearing sky it is followed by a rainbow. Beautifully written; illustrated in color. 5-7

## Social studies

### City and country life

- See also Bibliographies for Chapters 15, 16, and 18.
- BESKOW, ELSA. *Pelle's New Sun* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- BROWN, MARCIA. *The Little Carousel* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- BURTON, VIRGINIA. *Katy and the Big Snow* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- , *The Little House* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- , *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).
- DAWSON, ROSEMARY and RICHARD. *A Walk in the City*, ill. by authors. Viking, 1950. 4-6

FELT, SUE *Rota Too Little* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

HADER, BERTA and ELMER. *The Farmer in the Dell*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1931. Seasonal life and activity on an old-fashioned farm. 6-8

—, *The Little Town*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1941. A good introduction to the stores, public buildings, and services essential to community life. 6-8

—, *Lost in the Zoo*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1951. No one could convince John that he was the one who was lost at the zoo. Fine color pictures. 5-7

IPCAR, DAHLOV. *One Horse Farm*, ill. by author. Doubleday, 1950. This story of the activities of a boy and a farm horse gives a good picture of farm life. Attractive illustrations in color. 5-7

KINGMAN, LEE *Peter's Long Walk*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Doubleday, 1953. 4-6

LENSKI, LOIS. *The Little Auto* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

—, *The Little Farm* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

MCGINLEY, PHYLLIS. *All Around the Town* (see Bibliography, Chapter 4).

MARINO, DOROTHY. *Little Angela and Her Puppy*, ill. by author. Lippincott, 1954. 5-7

SAUER, JULIA. *Mike's Horse* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

SCHLEIN, MIRIAM. *City Boy, Country Boy*, ill. by Katherine Evans. Childrens Press, 1955. Two little children describe the highlights of their contrasting environments. 5-7

SCHLOAT, G. WARREN. *Milk for You*, ill. with diagrams and photographs. Scribner, 1949. On a visit to a dairy farm, the children learn all about milk, from how it forms in the cow's udder to how it is processed and distributed. 5-7

—, *The Wonderful Egg*, ill. with photographs and diagrams. Scribner, 1952. In similar format is the story of how chickens develop in the eggs, poultry is raised, and how eggs are prepared for market. 6-8

TRESSELT, ALVIN. *Wake Up, Farm!* ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Lothrop, 1955. 5-7

## The circus

AUSTIN, MARGOT. *Barney's Adventure* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15)

BROMHALL, WINIFRED. *Circus Surprise*, ill. by author. Knopf, 1954. Finding a little lost circus bear rewards Sue and Sandy with fine seats at the circus. 6-8

COOPER, PAGE. *Amigo, Circus Horse* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17).

DAUGHERTY, JAMES. *Andy and the Lion* (see Bibliography, Chapter 14).

DENNIS, MORGAN. *Burlap* (see Bibliography, Chapter 17).

FLACK, MARJORIE. *Wast for William* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

PALAZZO, TONY. *Susie the Cat*, ill. by author. Viking, 1949. On a trip to the circus with her young master, Susie decides to acquire a few performer's skills. 5-8

PETERSHAM, MAUD and MISKA. *The Circus Baby*; A

*Picture Book*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1950. Delightful nonsense about the mother elephant who tried to teach her baby to eat at a table like the clown's little boy. 5-7

WILL and NICOLAS [pseud. for William Lipkind and Nicolas Mordvinoff]. *Circus Ruckus*, ill. by Nicolas. Harcourt, 1954. 5-8

## The American scene

BAITY, ELIZABETH. *Americans Before Columbus*, ill. by C. B. Falls. Viking, 1951. 12-16

—, *America Before Man*, ill. by C. B. Falls. Viking, 1953. 12-16

BATE, NORMAN. *Who Built the Bridge?* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

—, *Who Built the Highway?* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

—, *Who Fishes for Oil?* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).

BLEEKER, SONIA. *The Cherokee; Indians of the Mountains*, ill. by Althea Karr. Morrow, 1952.

—, *The Crow Indians; Hunters of the Northern Plains*, ill. by Althea Karr. Morrow, 1953.

—, *The Pueblo Indians; Farmers of the Rio Grande*, ill. by Patricia Boodell. Morrow, 1955. These three regional Indian books, together with several other titles in this series, give valuable information as to history, customs, legendary lore, and present-day life of many Indian tribes. 9-11

CAYANAH, FRANCES. *Our Country's Story*, ill. by Janice Holland. Rand McNally, 1945. 7-10

DAUGHERTY, JAMES. *Of Courage Undaunted* (see Bibliography, Chapter 18).

—, *Trappers and Traders of the Far West*, ill. by author. Random, 1952 (Landmark Book). The story of John Jacob Astor and the courageous men who helped him establish the Western fur trade. 10-13

DUVOISIN, ROGER. *And There Was America*, ill. by author. Knopf, 1938. 9-11

FOSTER, GENEVIEVE. *Abraham Lincoln's World*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1944.

—, *George Washington's World*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1941.

HAYS, WILMA PITCHFORD. *Christmas on the Mayflower*, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. Coward-McCann, 1956.

—, *Pilgrim Thanksgiving*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Coward-McCann, 1955.

The author creates the true spirit of these two early holiday celebrations for children through the characters of young colonial Damaris and Giles Hopkins, who are active participants in the events. 8-11

HOFSINDE, ROBERT. *The Indian's Secret World*, ill. by author. Morrow, 1955. Twelve informative tales about the significance of tribal customs among different American Indian groups. An unusual book with fine color illustrations. 11-14

HOLLING, HOLLING C. *Minn of the Mississippi*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1951.

—, *Paddle-to-the-Sea*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1941.

—, *Seabird*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1948.

—, *Tree in the Trail*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1942.

- Beautiful large-size books with illustrations that are historical, geological, and geographical panoramas in story form. 9-13
- JENSEN, LEE. *The Pony Express*, ill. with historical pictures and by Nicholas Eggenhofer. Grosset, 1955. This is a unique pictorial as well as historical survey of the development of mail service up to the time of the transcontinental telegraph. A contribution to the story of westward expansion. 10—
- JUDSON, CLARA. *The Mighty Soo; 500 Years at Sault Ste. Marie*, ill. by Robert Frankenberg. Follett, 1955. A particularly fascinating section in this history of Sault Ste. Marie from Indian times until today is on the building of the locks and canals. 10-14
- MASON, VAN WYCK. *The Winter at Valley Forge*, ill. by E. Harper Johnson. Random, 1953 (Landmark Book). A vivid telling of one of the harshest ordeals of the Revolutionary War. 10-14
- PETERSHAM, MAUD and MISKA. *An American ABC*, ill. by authors. Macmillan, 1941. An alphabet of American history and biography, with a beautiful full-page illustration in color marking each event. 7-10
- PYNE, MABEL. *The Little Geography of the United States*, ill. by author. Houghton, 1941. 7-10
- SHIPPEN, KATHERINE. *The Great Heritage*, ill. by C. B. Falls. Viking, 1947. Individual chapters describe America's leading resources, and how man's wise and unwise use of them is reflected in America's development. 12-16
- , *Passage to America; the Story of the Great Migrations*. Harper, 1950. Stories of the larger groups which have emigrated and their contribution to American life. 12-16
- Other countries**
- BUCKLEY, PETER. *Michel of Switzerland*, ill. by author. F. Watts, 1955. A slender book that gives interesting introductory coverage to Switzerland agriculturally, industrially, and socially. Photographs are exceptional in quality. 9-12
- CLÉMENT, MARGUERITE. *In France*, ill. by William Pène Du Bois. Viking, 1956. 11-14
- FOSTER, GENEVIEVE. *Augustus Caesar's World, a Story of Ideas and Events from B.C. 44 to 14 A.D.*, ill. by author. Scribner, 1947. 10-14
- HAYS, WILMA FITCHFORD. *The Story of Valentine*, ill. by Leonard Weisgard. Coward-McCann, 1956. 8-12
- KENNEDY, JEAN. *Here Is India*, rev. ed., ill. with photographs. Scribner, 1954. Descriptions of the country, work, peoples, customs, and political changes. 12-16
- LAUBER, PATRICIA. *Battle Against the Sea*, ill. with photographs and maps. Coward-McCann, 1956. The story of the efforts of valiant Dutch people to protect their land from the sea, from earliest times through crises of recent years and into the future. 10-15
- MCNEER, MAY YONGE. *The Mexican Story*, ill. by Lynd Ward. Farrar, Straus, 1953 (Ariel Books). 9-12
- MEARS, HELEN. *The First Book of Japan*, ill. by Kathleen Elgin. F. Watts, 1953. Accurate information in an introductory book of Japanese industry, social life, crafts, and government. 9-12
- PATON, ALAN. *The Land and People of South Africa*, ill. with photographs. Lippincott, 1955. A distinguished writer for adults encompasses the history, geography, and social and economic problems of his country in a highly stimulating book for younger readers. 12—
- POLITI, LEO. *Little Leo* (see Bibliography, Chapter 15).
- SPENCER, CORNELIA [pseud. for Grace Yaukey]. *Made in China*, rev. ed., ill. by Kurt Wiese. Knopf, 1953. Some thirty Chinese arts and crafts which interpret the skills of the Chinese people from times past until today. 11-15
- UNSTEAD, R. J. *Looking at History; Britain from Cavemen to the Present Day*. Macmillan, 1956. Emphasis is on social history of the English people, and the sections on early men and the Middle Ages are particularly valuable because of simple text and numerous illustrations. 8-12
- VAN LOON, HENDRIK. *The Story of Mankind*, rev. ed. Liveright, 1951. 12—
- WEBB, NANCY and JEAN FRANCIS. *The Hawaiian Islands; from Monarchy to Democracy*, ill. by Isami Kashiwagi. Viking, 1956. This history of Hawaii achieves a high level of interest in the telling, and a wide coverage of events, customs, and traditions. 13—
- WILLIAMS-ELLIS, AMABEL, and FREDERICK J. FISHER. *The Story of English Life*, rev. ed., ill. by Wilma Hickson. Coward-McCann, 1947. 12-16
- WINWAR, FRANCES. *The Land of the Italian People*, ill. with photographs. Lippincott, 1951. Includes good coverage of the country and its people, and a historical summary. 11-14
- Art and music**
- BAUER, MARION and ETHEL PEYSER. *How Music Grew*, rev. ed. Putnam, 1939, o.p. 11—
- CARMER, CARL. *America Sings; Stories and Songs of Our Country's Growing*, ill. by Elizabeth Carmer. Knopf, 1942. Some thirty folk songs arranged according to locale. 10—
- CHASE, ALICE. *Famous Paintings, an Introduction to Art for Young People*. Platt, 1951. Five thousand years of art, with numerous reproductions and brief, challenging text. 10—
- CRAVEN, THOMAS. *The Rainbow Book of Art*. World Pub., 1956. A history of world art from primitive times to the present. Lavishly illustrated with almost 400 pictures of which 32 are in color. 12—
- , *A Treasury of Art Masterpieces; from the Renaissance to the Present Day*, rev. and enl. Simon & Schuster, 1952. All ages
- DIKE, HELEN. *Stories from the Great Metropolitan Operas*, ill. by Gustaf Tenggren. Random, 1943, o.p. Twenty-five stories of the more familiar operas, with brief musical insertions illustrated in color. 11—
- GIBSON, KATHARINE. *More Pictures to Grow Up With*. Studio, 1946.
- , *Pictures to Grow Up With*. Studio, 1942. 12-16

- HILLIER, VIRGIL M. and EDWARD GREENE HUEY. *A Child's History of Art*. Appleton, 1951. 10-14
- HUNTINGTON, HARRIET. *Tune Up*, ill. with photographs Doubleday, 1942. The seating plan of an orchestra is included in this excellent introduction to orchestral instruments. 9-12
- LUTHER, FRANK. *Americans and Their Songs*, Harper, 1942, o.p. Songs the people sang, from early colonial days through great periods and events in history. 11—
- MONTGOMERY, ELIZABETH *The Story Behind Musical Instruments*. Dodd, 1953. Absorbing accounts of instruments and the men who developed them. 11-15
- POSELL, ELSA *This Is an Orchestra*, ill. with photographs. Houghton, 1950. 8-12

## Religious books

### Prayers and stories

- FARJEON, ELEANOR *A Prayer for Little Things*, ill. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Houghton, 1945. 3-8
- FIELD, RACHEL *Prayer for a Child*, ill. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Macmillan, 1944. A charming prayer written by a poet for her own little girl Caldecott Medal. 4-7
- FRANCIS OF ASSISI, SAINT. *Song of the Sun*, from *The Canticle of the Sun*, ill. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Macmillan, 1952. 6-9
- JOHNSON, EMILIE E. *A Little Book of Prayers*, ill. by Maud and Miska Petersham. Viking, 1941. 4-8
- JONES, JESSIE ORTON, ed. *Small Rain*, ill. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Viking, 1943. 4-8
- *This Is the Way*, ill. by Elizabeth Orton Jones. Viking, 1951. "Prayers and precepts from the world's religions," illustrated with children growing together in peace and harmony. 6-9
- LINES, KATHLEEN *Once in Royal David's City*, ill. by Harold Jones. E. Watts, 1956. This exquisite picture-book of the Nativity tells the story simply, with a line or two for each picture and the Biblical verses at the end of the book. 4-8
- MAURY, JEAN, ed. *A First Bible*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Oxford, 1934. 8-12
- TUDOR, TASHA, ill. *First Prayers*. Oxford, 1952. 4-7
- YATES, ELIZABETH, comp. *Your Prayers and Mine*, ill. by Nora Unwin. Houghton, 1954. Moving prayers from the Bible and other sources are assembled in a beautiful book with pages that have the appearance of an old manuscript. 11-15

### Religious stories and instruction

- BARNHART, NANCY, ed. *The Lord Is My Shepherd*, ill. by editor Scribner, 1949. A book beautiful in text and format which tells the Bible stories briefly but with considerable use of Biblical language. 10-14
- BOWIE, WALTER RUSSELL. *The Bible Story for Boys and Girls, New Testament*, ill. by Stephani and Edward Godwin. Abingdon, 1951.
- *The Bible Story for Boys and Girls, Old Testament*, ill. by Stephani and Edward Godwin. Abingdon, 1952.
- Companion volumes illustrated in color and black and white. 9-14

- BUNYAN, JOHN. *Pilgrim's Progress* (see Bibliography, Chapter 3).
- CEDER, GEORGIANNA. *Ann of Bethany*, ill. by Helen Torrey. Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1951. A little Jewish girl warns Joseph and Mary of King Herod's search for the Christ Child. 9-11
- EVERS, ALF. *The Three Kings of Saba*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Lippincott, 1955. Three angry kings journey to Bethlehem to find out from a new prophet which of them should be the sole ruler. Before the Child and His mother, they learn humility and love. 8-14
- FARJEON, ELEANOR. *Ten Saints*, ill. by Helen Sewell. Oxford, 1936. Stories of St. Francis, St. Christopher, and others, beautifully told by a distinguished writer. 8-12
- FITCH, FLORENCE MARY. *One God: the Ways We Worship Him*, ill. with photographs chosen by Beatrice Creighton. Lothrop, 1944. 8-12
- GOODSPEED, EDGAR, ed. *The Junior Bible*, ill. by Frank Dobias. Macmillan, 1936. 9-13
- The Great Story*, from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible. Harcourt, 1938.
- The Great Story*, from the Douay Version of the Holy Bible. Harcourt, 1938.
- The life of Jesus in Bible language with modern sentence and paragraph structure, and illustrated with color reproductions from fifteen famous paintings.
- GWYNNE, J. HAROLD. *The Rainbow Book of Bible Stories*, ill. by Steele Savage. World Pub., 1956. This text, by a scholarly clergyman, covers the favorite stories of the Old and New Testaments. The illustrations are superb. 10—
- HARTMAN, GERTRUDE. *In Bible Days*, ill. by Kathleen Voute. Macmillan, 1948. Stories from the Old and New Testaments in which considerable geographical and historical information is incorporated. 12-16
- HOGARTH, GRACE ALLEN. *A Bible ABC*. Lippincott, 1941. This is a lovable little book and an ideal lead into Bible stories. 4-6
- JEWETT, SOPHIE. *God's Troubadour; the Story of Saint Francis of Assisi*, ill. with reproductions of frescoes by Giotto Crowell, 1957. 9-12
- JONES, ELIZABETH ORTON. *How Far Is It to Bethlehem?* ill. by author. Horn Book, 1955. 10—
- JONES, MARY ALICE. *The Bible Story of Creation*, ill. by Janice Holland. Rand McNally, 1946. 9-14
- *Tell Me about God*, ill. by Pelagie Doane. Rand McNally, 1943.
- *Tell Me about Jesus*, ill. by Pelagie Doane. Rand McNally, 1944.
- *Tell Me about the Bible*, ill. by Pelagie Doane. Rand McNally, 1945. 4-9
- KING, MARIAN. *Cost of Many Colors; the Story of Joseph*, ill. by Steele Savage. Lippincott, 1950. A good biography which retains the spirit of the Bible in language and incident. 12-15
- LATHROP, DOROTHY, ill. *Animals of the Bible*, with text from the King James Version. Lippincott, 1937. A beautiful picture book of Bible stories in which animals have a part. 6-9
- LILLIE, AMY MORRIS. *Naïvan, Boy of Capernaum*, ill. by Nedda Walker Dutton, 1945. 10-12



- , *Stephen, Boy of the Mountain*, ill. by Nedda Walker. Dutton, 1947. The story of a Greek child healed by Jesus. 10-12
- MENOTTI, GIAN-CARLO. *Amahl and the Night Visitors*, adapted by Frances Frost, ill. by Roger Duvoisin. McGraw, 1952. In this beautifully and reverently told Christmas story of the Wise Men, a little crippled shepherd boy is healed after he sends his most treasured possession to the Christ Child. 10—
- PETERSHAM, MAUD and MISKA, ill. *The Christ Child, As Told by Matthew and Luke*. Doubleday, 1931. 4-9
- , *Jesus' Story*, Bible text from King James Version. Macmillan, 1942. 6-10
- , *Stories from the Old Testament: Joseph, Moses, Ruth, David* Winston, 1938, o.p. 7-12
- , *The Story of Jesus*, Bible text from the Confederation of Christian Doctrine Edition. Macmillan, 1944. 6-10
- SHIPPEN, KATHERINE. *Moses*. Harper, 1949. The story of a great leader's sense of dedication to his people and to God. 12-15
- SMITH, RUTH, ed. *The Tree of Life* (see Bibliography, Chapter 13). 12-15
- SMITHER, ETHEL. *A Picture Book of Palestine*, ill. by Ruth King Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1947. Pictures and text describe how people lived and worked in Bible times. 8-11

### Hymns and carols

- CASTAGNOTTA, GRACE, comp. and music arr. *Christmas Carols*, ill. by Hendrik W. Van Loon. Simon & Schuster, 1937. A large bright book in Van Loon's gayest style, with brief histories and simple arrangements of each carol.
- SEEGER, RUTH, comp. *American Folk Songs for Christmas*, ill. by Barbara Cooney. Doubleday, 1953. A book beautiful in format which contains over fifty holiday songs.
- SIMON, HENRY, ed. *A Treasury of Christmas Songs and Carols*, ill. by Raffaello Busoni. Houghton, 1955. A comprehensive collection from many lands, with historical notes for each song. Colorfully illustrated.
- WASNER, FRANZ, ed. *The Trapp-Family Book of Christmas Songs*, ill. by Agathe Trapp Pantheon Bks., 1950. Songs from many lands, with foreign language songs appearing in the native language and English.

WHEELER, OPAL. *Sing for Christmas*, ill. by Gustaf Tenggren. Dutton, 1943.

—, *Sing in Praise*, ill. by Marjorie Torrey. Dutton, 1946.

There is a color illustration and a story of origin for each song in these books.

### Dictionaries and encyclopedias

- Check with libraries or publishers for latest editions of reference materials, since they are frequently revised.
- Britannica Junior; the Boys' and Girls' Encyclopaedia*, prepared under the supervision of the editors of the Encyclopaedia Britannica Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15 vols. Content is directed to children of elementary and junior high grades. Articles are well illustrated and authentic. 9-14
- Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia and Fact Index*. Compton, 15 vols. A survey of the whole field of knowledge with good illustrations, convenient indexing, and reliable articles. 9-17
- New Winston Dictionary for Children*. Winston. 9-13
- New Winston Dictionary for Young People*. Winston. 12-17
- Useful, well-illustrated dictionaries which serve children of school age.
- Thorndike-Barnhart Beginning Dictionary*. Scott. 9-10
- Thorndike-Barnhart Junior Dictionary*. Scott. 10-13
- Thorndike-Barnhart Advanced Junior Dictionary*. Scott. 12-14
- Thorndike Barnhart High School Dictionary*. Scott. 14-17
- Definitions that are easy to comprehend, an abundance of illustrative material, and a simple pronunciation system distinguish all of these.
- Webster's Elementary Dictionary*. Am. Bk. Edited especially for grades four to six. 9-11
- Webster's Students Dictionary*. Am. Bk. An excellent dictionary, printed in clear type and well illustrated. 12-18
- World Book Encyclopedia*. Field Enterprises, 19 vols. Authentic, comprehensive articles. May be used as a popular reference by adults as well as children. Well illustrated and bound. 9—
- WRIGHT, WENDELL W., assisted by Helene Laird. *The Rainbow Dictionary*, ill. by Joseph Low. World Pub., 1947. A fresh, imaginative dictionary containing more than 1000 pictures in color and definitions for 2100 words. 6-9

## Newbery and Caldecott Awards

Frederic G. Melcher, editor of *Publishers' Weekly*, has established two awards for distinction in the field of children's books. The first of these is the Newbery Medal, given annually for the book, published in the United States, which is voted "the most distinguished literature" for children. The Caldecott Medal is given for the best picture book of the year. The awards are determined by a committee of children's and school librarians from the American Library Association. Librarians, teachers, and children throughout the country express their choices for these coveted awards. Good sources of information about many of the award winning books are *Illustrators of Children's Books, 1744-1945* by Bertha E. Mahony, Louise P. Latimer, and Beulah Folmsbee and *Newbery Medal Books: 1922-1955* by Bertha E. Mahony and Elinor Whitney Field (see Bibliography, Chapter 2).

### Newbery Medal Books

- 1922 Van Loon, Hendrik. *The Story of Mankind*. Liveright.
- 1923 Lofting, Hugh. *The Voyages of Dr. Dolittle*. Stokes.
- 1924 Hawes, Charles Boardman. *The Dark Frigate*. Little.
- 1925 Finger, Charles J. *Tales from Silver Lands*. Doubleday.
- 1926 Chrisman, Arthur. *Shen of the Sea*. Dutton.
- 1927 James, Will. *Smoky*. Scribner.
- 1928 Mukerji, Dhan Gopal. *Gay Neck*. Dutton.
- 1929 Kelly, Eric P. *The Trumpeter of Krakow*. Macmillan.
- 1930 Field, Rachel. *Hitty, Her First Hundred Years*. Macmillan.
- 1931 Coatsworth, Elizabeth. *The Cat Who Went to Heaven*. Macmillan.
- 1932 Armer, Laura Adams. *Waterless Mountain*. Longmans.
- 1933 Lewis, Elizabeth Foreman. *Young Fu of the Upper Yangtze*. Winston.
- 1934 Meigs, Cornelia. *Invisible Louisa*. Little.
- 1935 Shanoun, Monica. *Dobry*. Viking.
- 1936 Brink, Carol Ryrie. *Caddie Woodlawn*. Macmillan.
- 1937 Sawyer, Ruth. *Roller Skates*. Viking.
- 1938 Sereby, Kate. *The White Stag*. Viking.
- 1939 Enright, Elizabeth. *Thimble Summer*. Rinehart.
- 1940 Daugherty, James. *Daniel Boone*. Viking.
- 1941 Perry, Armstrong. *Call It Courage*. Macmillan.
- 1942 Edmonds, Walter. *The Matchlock Gun*. Dodd.
- 1943 Gray, Elizabeth Janet. *Adam of the Road*. Viking.
- 1944 Forbes, Esther. *Johnny Tremain*. Houghton.
- 1945 Lawson, Robert. *Rabbit Hill*. Viking.

- 1946 Lenski, Lois. *Strauberry Girl*. Lippincott.
- 1947 Bailey, Carolyn Sherwin. *Miss Hickory*. Viking.
- 1948 DuBois, William Fene. *The Twenty-One Balloons*. Viking.
- 1949 Henry, Marguerite. *King of the Wind*. Rand McNally.
- 1950 De Angeli, Marguerite. *The Door in the Wall*. Doubleday.
- 1951 Yates, Elizabeth. *Amos Fortune, Free Man*. Aladdin.
- 1952 Esres, Eleanor. *Ginger Pye*. Harcourt.
- 1953 Clark, Ann Nolan. *Secret of the Andes*. Viking.
- 1954 Krumgold, Joseph . . . and now Miguel. Crowell.
- 1955 DeJong, Meindert. *The Wheel on the School*. Harper.
- 1956 Latham, Jean Lee. *Carry On, Mr. Bouditch*. Houghton.
- 1957 Sorensen, Virginia. *Miracles on Maple Hill*. Harcourt.
- 1958 Keith, Harold. *Rifles for Watie*. Crowell.

### Caldecott Medal Books

- 1938 Lathrop, Dorothy. *Animals of the Bible*. Stokes.
- 1939 Handforth, Thomas. *Mei Li*. Doubleday.
- 1940 Aulatre, Ingri and Edgar d'. *Abraham Lincoln*. Doubleday.
- 1941 Lawson, Robert. *They Were Strong and Good*. Viking.
- 1942 McCloskey, Robert. *Make Way for Ducklings*. Viking.
- 1943 Burton, Virginia Lee. *The Little House*. Houghton.
- 1944 Slobodkin, Louis, ill. Thurber, James. *Many Moons*. Harcourt.
- 1945 Jones, Elizabeth Orton, ill. Field, Rachel. *Prayer for a Child*. Macmillan.
- 1946 Petersham, Maud and Miska. *The Rooster Crows*. Macmillan.
- 1947 Weisgard, Leonard, ill. MacDonald, Golden. *The Little Island*. Doubleday.
- 1948 Duvoisin, Roger, ill. Tresselt, Alvin. *White Snow, Bright Snow*. Lothrop.
- 1949 Hader, Berta and Elmer. *The Big Snow*. Macmillan.
- 1950 Pollit, Leo. *Song of the Swallows*. Scribner.
- 1951 Milhous, Katherine. *The Egg Tree*. Scribner.
- 1952 Mordvinoff, Nicolas, ill. [Nicolas, pseud.]. Lipkind, William [Will, pseud.]. *Finders Keepers*. Harcourt.
- 1953 Ward, Lynd. *The Biggest Bear*. Houghton.
- 1954 Bemelmans, Ludwig. *Madeline's Rescue*. Viking.
- 1955 Brown, Marcia, ill. Pettault, Charles. *Cinderella*. Scribner.
- 1956 Rojankovsky, Feodor, ill. Langstaff, John. *Frog Went a Courtin'*. Harcourt.
- 1957 Simont, Marc. *A Tree Is Nice*. Harper.
- 1958 McCloskey, Robert. *Time of Wonder*. Viking.

## Publishers and Publishers' Addresses

- ABELARD Abelard-Schuman, 404 4th Ave., New York.  
 ABINGDON COKESBURY, Abingdon Press, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn.  
 ALADDIN. See American Bk.  
 AMERICAN BK., 55 5th Ave., New York 3.  
 AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION, 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington 6, D.C.  
 AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION, 50 E. Huron, Chicago 11.  
 APPLETON Appleton-Century-Crofts, 35 W. 32nd St., New York 1.  
 BEECHHURST PRESS, INC., 11 E. 36th St., New York.  
 BELL George Bell & Sons, Ltd, 6 Portugal St., York House, W.C. 2, London.  
 BENTLEY Robert Bentley, 581 Boylston, Boston 16.  
 BOBBS The Bobbs-Merrill Co, 730 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis 7.  
 BRUNNER Robert Brunner, 1212 Ave. of the Americas, New York 36.  
 CAMBRIDGE Cambridge Univ. Press, Bentley House, 200 Euston Rd., N.W., London.  
 CENTURY Century House, Watkins Glen, N.Y.  
 CHATTO Chatto & Windus, 40-42 William IV St., W.C. 2, London.  
 CHILDRENS PRESS, Jackson Blvd & Racine Ave., Chicago 7.  
 CLARENDON. See Oxford.  
 CLOWES William Clowes & Sons, Ltd, Little New St., E.C. 4, London.  
 COMPTON, 1000 N. Dearborn, Chicago 10.  
 COWARD Coward-McCann, 210 Madison Ave., New York 16.  
 CRITERION. Criterion Books, 257 4th, New York.  
 CROWELL. See Studio.  
 CROWN Crown Publishers, 419 4th Ave., New York 16.  
 DAY John Day Co, 62 W. 45th St., New York 36.  
 DIAL Dial Press, 461 4th Ave., New York 16.  
 DIDIER 660 Madison Ave., New York 21.  
 DODD Dodd, Mead & Co, 432 4th Ave., New York 16.  
 DORAN. See Doubleday.  
 DOUBLEDAY 575 Madison Ave., New York 22.  
 DOWER Dover Publications, 920 Broadway, New York.  
 DUCKWORTH Gerald Duckworth & Co., Ltd, 3 Henrietta St., W.C. 2, London.  
 DUTTON E. P. Dutton & Co., 300 4th Ave., New York.  
 ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA 425 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11.  
 EXPRESSION The Expression Co, Magnolia, Mass.  
 FABER Faber & Faber, Ltd., 23-24 Russell Sq., W.C. 1, London.  
 FARRAR, STRAUS, FARRAR, Straus & Young, 101 5th Ave., New York 3.  
 FAXON F. W. Faxon Co, 83 Francis St., Boston 15.  
 FIELD ENTERPRISES Educational Division, Merchandise Mart Plaza, Chicago 34.  
 FOLLETT 1010 W. Washington Blvd., Chicago 7.  
 GARDEN CITY BOOKS. See Doubleday.  
 GINN Ginn & Co., Steadler Bldg., Boston 17.  
 GROSSET Grosset & Dunlap, 1107 Broadway, New York 10.  
 HALE E. M. Hale & Co, 119 S. Dewey, Eau Claire, Wis.  
 HARCOURT Harcourt, Brace, 383 Madison Ave., New York.  
 HARPER Harper & Brothers, 49 E. 33rd St., New York.  
 HEATH D. C. Heath & Co., 285 Columbus Ave., Boston.  
 HERITAGE. See Macy.  
 HOLIDAY Holiday House, 8 W. 13th St., New York 11.  
 HOLT Henry Holt & Co, 383 Madison Ave., New York.  
 HORN BOOK Horn Book Co, 585 Boylston, Boston 16.  
 HOUGHTON Houghton Mifflin Co, 2 Park St., Boston 7.  
 KNOPF Alfred A. Knopf, 501 Madison Ave., New York.  
 LIBRARY JOURNAL Published by R. R. Bowker Co., 62 W. 45th St., New York 36.  
 LIPPINCOTT E. Washington Sq., Philadelphia 5.  
 LITTLE Little, Brown & Co, 34 Beacon St., Boston 6.  
 LIVERIGHT Liveright Publishing Corp., 386 4th Ave., New York 16.  
 LONGMANS Longmans, Green & Co., 55 5th Ave., New York 3.  
 LOTHROP Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Co, 419 4th Ave., New York 16.  
 MCBRIDE The McBride Co., 200 E. 37th St., New York.  
 MCGRAW McGraw-Hill Book Co, 330 W. 42nd St., New York 36.  
 MCKAY David McKay Co., 55 5th Ave., New York 3.  
 MACMILLAN 60 5th Ave., New York 11.  
 MACRAE SMITH 225 S. 15th St., Philadelphia 2.  
 MACY The George Macy Co., 595 Madison Ave., New York 22.  
 MESSNER Julian Messner, 8 W. 40th St., New York 18.  
 MODERN LIBRARY 457 Madison Ave., New York 22.  
 MORROW William Morrow, 425 4th Ave., New York.  
 NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH, 704 S. 6th St., Champaign, Ill.  
 NELSON Thomas Nelson & Sons, 19 E. 47th St., New York 17.  
 NOVELLO 160 Wardour St., W 1, London.  
 NUTT David Nutt, 212 Shaftesbury Ave., London.  
 OXFORD Oxford Univ. Press, 114 5th Ave., New York.  
 PAGE L. C. Page & Co, 53 Beacon St., Boston 8.  
 PANTHEON Pantheon Books, 333 6th Ave., New York.  
 PELLEGRINI See Farrar, Straus.  
 PETER PAUPER Peter Pauper Press, 629 McQueston Parkway, Mount Vernon, N.Y.  
 PRAEGER Frederick A. Praeger, 105 W. 40th St., New York 18.  
 PRENTICE-HALL Prentice-Hall, 70 5th Ave., New York.  
 PUTNAM G. P. Putnam's Sons, 210 Madison Ave., New York 16.  
 RAND McNALLY P.O. Box 7600, Chicago 80.  
 RANDOM 457 Madison Ave., New York 22.  
 RINEHART 232 Madison Ave., New York 16.  
 ROW Row, Peterson, 1911 Ridge Ave., Evanston, Ill.  
 ROY Roy Publishers, 30 E. 74th St., New York 21.  
 W. R. SCOTT 8 W. 13th St., New York 11.  
 SCOTT Scott, Foresman & Co., 433 E. Erie, Chicago 11.  
 SCRIBNER Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 5th Ave., New York 17.  
 SHEED Sheed & Ward, 840 Broadway, New York 3.  
 SIMON & SCHUSTER 630 5th Ave., New York 20.  
 STOKES See Lippincott.  
 STUDIO Studio Publications, 432 4th Ave., New York 16.  
 TOWER PRESS 631 N. 50th St., Milwaukee, Wis.  
 VANGUARD 424 Madison Ave., New York 17.  
 VIKING 625 Madison Ave., New York 22.  
 WAKE BROOK HOUSE Sanbornville, N.H.  
 E. WARD Edmund Ward, 16 New St., Leicester, Eng.  
 WARNE Frederick Warne, 210 5th Ave., New York.  
 WATSON-GUPTILL Watson Guptill Publications 24 W. 40th St., New York 18.  
 WATTS Franklin Watts, 699 Madison Ave., New York.  
 WELLS Wells Gardner, Darton Co., Ltd, 32 33 Gosfield St., W. 1, London.  
 WESTMINSTER PRESS Witherspoon Bldg., Philadelphia 7.  
 A. WHITMAN 560 W. Lake St., Chicago 6.  
 WHITMAN Whitman Publishing Co, Racine, Wis.  
 WHITTELEY HOUSE See McGraw.  
 WILCOX & FOLLETT See Follett.  
 WILSON H. W. Wilson, 950-972 Univ. Ave., New York.  
 WINSTON The John C. Winston Co., 1010 Arch St., Philadelphia 7.  
 WORLD BK. 313 Park Hill Ave., Yonkers, N.Y.  
 WORLD PUB The World Publishing Co., 2231 W. 110th St., Cleveland 2, Ohio.

## Guide to pronunciation

The following list contains names of authors and illustrators, titles of books, characters, and a few miscellaneous items. Words which can be found in a standard college dictionary, those which are spelled phonetically, and those with which students are likely to be familiar from other fields are not included. Symbols used are as follows: a as in hat, ā as in age; ā as in care; a as in father; e as in let; ē as in see; ēr as in term; i as in pin; ī as in five, o as in hot; ō as in go, ô as in order, all; ou as in house; u as in cup; u as in full; u as in rule; ū as in use; zh as in measure; ə represents the a in about, e in taken, i in pencil, o in lemon, u in circus; Y, as in the French du, is pronounced by speaking ē while the lips are rounded for ū; N, as in the French bon, is not pronounced, but the vowel before it is nasal. All other consonants have their phonetic pronunciations.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Afanasiev a fa na'syif                                       | Hamm ham   |
| Akhenaten a ke na tən  | Hatshepsut hat shep'sut                          |
| Arduzzone ūr di zō'ni  | Hazard a zar'                                    |
| Artzybasheff ar tsi ba' shif                                 | Heyerdahl hā'ēr dal                              |
| Asbjornsen ās'byērn sen                                      | Hutopadesa hi tū pa dā'sha                       |
| Aucassin ō ka saN  | Holle hōl'la                                     |
| Barbault bar'bōld  | Jancsi yan'sē                                    |
| Baruch bar'uh  | Jataka ja'ta ka                                  |
| Behn bān   | Josian jō si'an                                  |
| Benary-Isbert, Margot ben ār'ē is'bért, mar'gō               | Kaa ka   |
| Benét be nā'   | Kjelgaard kel'gard                               |
| Berquin, Armand ber kaN', ar maN'                            | Lathrop lā thrəp                                 |
| Beshow bes'hō  | Lechow le'chou                                   |
| Bevis bē'vis   | Liers lirs                                       |
| Bidpai biā'pi  | Lisitzky li sit'shē                              |
| Bontemps, Arna bōN tōN', ar na                               | Mafatu ma fa tu                                  |
| Budulinek bu dū'lin ek                                       | Marquis mar kē                                   |
| Charbonneau shar bōN nō                                      | Matt, Josef, Rudi māt, jō'zef, ru'dē             |
| Charlot, Jean shar lō', zhōN                                 | Milne mīln                                       |
| Chi-Weé chē wē   | Mordvinoff mōrd'vin of                           |
| Chincoteague ching'ka tēg                                    | Nefertiti ne fer tē'ti                           |
| Cinderlad, Per, Paal, Espen<br>sin'dar lad, pār, pāl, es'pən | Nicolette nē kō let'                             |
| Colum, Padraic kol'um, pō'drig                               | Palazzo pa lat'zō                                |
| Contes de Ma Mère l'Oye kōNt də mā mer lwa                   | Panchatantra pan chā tan' trə                    |
| Credle crā'dəl   | Pecos pā kas                                     |
| Cuchulain ku chu'lin   | Pelle pel'lē                                     |
| D'Aulnoy dōl nwa'  | Perrault pe rō'                                  |
| D'Armancour dar mōN kūr'                                     | Pitschi pit'chi                                  |
| Dasent dā sēnt   | Planudes plā nū'dēz                              |
| D'Aulaire dō lār'  | Politi pō lē'tē                                  |
| De Beaumont, Madame Leprince<br>də bō mōN', ma dam' lapraNs' | Pwyll and Pryderi pū'il pru dā'rē                |
| De Chavez, Padre dā cha'vās, pad'rā                          | Rojankousky rō jan kōf'shē                       |
| De Genius, Madame de zhōN lē', ma dam'                       | Sacajawea sak'a ja wē'a                          |
| De Jong, Meindert də yung, mīn'dert                          | San Ysidro san ē sē'drō                          |
| De Leeuw, Adèle də lā'ū, a del'                              | Seredy shūr'a dē                                 |
| Dorefell dō'rə fel   | Sita sē ta                                       |
| Du Bois, William Pène dY bwa, pen                            | Smolicheck smol'i chek                           |
| Du Soe du sō'  | Snegourka snye gur'kū                            |
| Duvoisin dy vwa zan'   | Spyri, Johanna shpē'rē, yō han'a                 |
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| Gylfi gYl'fə   | Yashima, Taro yā'shi ma, ta'rō                   |
|  | Yonie Wondernose yō nē wun'dər nōz               |

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